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THE 1568/1288.
PLAIN DEALER,

Anne A Letter 12.
COMEDY,

As it is Acted at the
THEATRE-ROYAL.

Written by Mr. WYCHERLEY.

——— *Ridiculum acri*
Fortius & melius magnas plerumque secat res.
Horat.



DUBLIN.

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1568/1288.



22. NOV. 1910
MUSEUM

The Epistle Dedicatory.

seems, the only Touchstone of Womens Vertue and Modesty. But hold, that Touchstone is equivocal, and, by the Strength of a Lady's Imagination, may become something that is not civil: But your Ladyship, I know, scorns to misapply a Touchstone. And, Madam, tho' you have not seen this Play, I hope (like other nice Ladies) you will the rather read it: Yet lest the Chamber-maid or Page shou'd not be trusted, and their Indulgence cou'd gain no further Admittences for it, than to their Ladies Lobbies or outward Room, take it into your Care and Protection; for by your Recommendation and Procurement, it may have the Honour to get into their Closets; for what they renounce in publick, often entertains 'em there, with your Help especially. In fine, Madam, for these and many other Reasons, you are the fittest Patroness or Judge of this Play; for you shew no Partiality to this or that Author: For from some, many Ladies will take a broad Jest as chearfully as from the Watermen, and sit at some down-right filthy Plays (as they call 'em) as well satisfied, and as still, as a Poet could wish 'em elsewhere. Therefore it must be the doubtful Obscenity of my Play alone they take Exceptions at, because it is too bashful for 'em: And indeed, most Women hate Men for attempting to halve on their Chastity; and Baudy, I find, like Satire, shou'd be home, not to have it taken notice of. But, now I mention Satire, some there are who say, 'Tis the Plain dealing of the Play, not the Obscenity; 'tis taking off the Ladies Masks, not offering at their Petticoats, which offends 'em: And generally they are not the handsomest, or most innocent, who are the most angry at their being discovered:

————— *Nihil est audacius illis
Deprensus; Iram, atq; animos à crimine sumunt.*

Pardon

The Epistle Dedicatory.

Pardon, Madam, the Quotation; for a Dedication can no more be without Ends of *Latin*, than Flattery: And 'tis no matter whom it is writ to; for an Author can as easily, I hope, suppose People to have more Understanding and Languages than they have, as well as more Virtues. But why, the Devil! shou'd any of the few modest and handsome be alarm'd? (for some there are who as well as any, deserve those Attributes, yet refrain not from seeing this Play, nor think it any Addition to their Virtue to set up for it in a Play-House, lest there it shou'd look too much like acting.) But why, I say, shou'd any at all of truly virtuous be concern'd, if those who are not so are distinguish'd from 'em? For by that Mask of Modesty which Women wear promiscuously in publick, they are all alike; and you can no more know a kept Wench from a Woman of Honour by her Looks than by her Dress: For those who are of Quality without Honour (if any such there are) they have their Quality to set off their false Modesty, as well as their false Jewels; and you must no more suspect their Countenances for counterfeit than their Pendants, tho' as the Plain Dealer *Montaigne* says, *Els envoy leur conscience au Bordel, & tiennent leur continence en regle*: But those who act as they look, ought not to be scandaliz'd at the Reprehension of others Faults, lest they tax themselves with 'em, and by too delicate and quick an Apprehension not only make that obscene which I meant innocent, but that satire on all, which was intended only on those who deserv'd it. But, Madam, I beg your Pardon for this Digression to civil Women and Ladies of Honour, since you and I shall never be the better for 'em; for a Comick Poet, and a Lady of your Profession, make most of the other sort; and the Stage and your Houses, like our Plantations, are propagated by the least nice Women, and, as with the Ministers of Justice, the Vices of
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The Epistle Dedicatory.

the Age are our best Business. But now I mention publick Persons, I can no longer defer doing you the Justice of a Dedication, and telling you your Own, who are, of all publick-spirited People, the most necessary, most communicative, most generous and hospitable: Your House has been the House of the People; your Sleep still disturb'd for the Publick; and when you arose, 'twas that others might lie down; and you waked that others might rest; The Good you have done is unspeakable. How many young unexperienc'd Heirs have you kept from rash foolish Marriages, and from being jilted for their Lives by the worst sort of Jilts, Wives? How many unbewitch'd Widowers Children have you preserv'd from the Tyranny of Stepmothers? How many old Doaters from Cuckoldom, and keeping other Mens Wenches and Children? How many Adulteries and unnatural Sins have you prevented? In fine, you have been a constant Scourge to the old Letcher, and often a Terror to the young: You have made Concupiscence its own Punishment, and extinguished Lust with Lust, like blowing up of Houses to stop the Fire.

*Nimirum propter continentiam, incontinentia
Necessaria est, incendium ignibus extinguitur.*

There's *Latin* for you again, Madam: I protest to you, as I am an Author, I cannot help it; nay, I can hardly keep my self from quoting *Aristotle* and *Horace*, and talking to you of the Rules of Writing, (like the *French* Authors) to shew you and my Reader I understand 'em. in my Epistle, lest neither of you should find it out by the Play: And according to the Rules of Dedications, 'tis no matter whether you understand, or no, what I quote or say to you of Writing; for an Author can 'as easily make any one a Judge or Critick in an Epistle, as
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The Epistle Dedicatory.

an Hero in his Play. But, Madam, that this may prove to the End a true Epistle Dedicatory, I'd have you know 'tis not without a Design upon you, which is in the behalf of the Fraternity of *Parnassus*, that Songs and Sonnets may go at your Houses, and in your Liberties, for Guineas, and half Guineas: and that Wit, at least with you, as of old, may be the Price of Beauty, and so you will prove a true Encourager of Poetry; for Love is a better Help to it than Wine; and Poets, like Painters, draw better after the Life than by fancy: Nay, in Justice, Madam, I think a Poet ought to be as free of your Houses, as of the Play-houses; since he contributes to the Support of both, and is as necessary to such as you, as a Ballad-Singer to a Pick-Purse, in convening the Cullies at the Theatres, to be pick'd up, and carry'd to Supper and Bed, at your Houses. And, Madam, the Reason of this Motion of mine is, because poor Poets can get no Favour in the Tying-Rooms, for they are no Keepers, you know; and Folly and Money, the old Enemies of Wit, are even too hard for it on its own Dunghill: and for other Ladies, a Poet can least go to the Price of them; besides, his Wit, which ought to recommend him to 'em, is as much an Obstruction to his Love, as to his Wealth or Preferment; for most Women now-a-days, apprehend Wit in a Lover, as much as in a Husband; they hate a Man that knows 'em, they must have a blind easy fool, whom they can lead by the Nose, and as the *Scythian* Women of old, must baffle a Man, and put out his Eyes, e're they will lie with him; and then too, like Thieves, when they have plunder'd and stript a Man, leave him. But if there shou'd be one of an hundred of those Ladies generous enough to give herself to a Man that has more Wit than Money, (all things consider'd) he wou'd think it cheaper coming to you for a Mistress, though you made him pay his
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The Epistle Dedicatory.

Guinea; as a Man in a Journey, (out of good Husbandry) had better pay for what he has in an Inn, than lie on Free-cost at a Gentleman's House.

In fine, Madam, like a faithful Dedicator, I hope I have done my self right in the first place. then you, and your Profession, which in the wisest and most Religious Government in the World, is honour'd with the Publick Allowance; and in those that are thought the most unciviliz'd and barbarous, is protected, and supported by the Ministers of Justice: And of you, Madam, I ought to say no more here, for your Virtues deserve a Poem rather than an Epistle, or a Volume entire to give the World your Memoirs, or Life at large, and which (upon the Word of an Author that has a mind to make an end of his Dedication) I promise to do, when I write the Annals of our *British* Love, which shall be dedicated to the Ladies concern'd, If they will not think them something too obscene too; when your Life, compar'd with many that are thought innocent, I doubt not, may vindicate you, and me, to the World, for the Confidence I have taken in this Address to you; which then may be thought neither impertinent nor immodest; and, whatsoever your Amorous Misfortunes have been, none can charge you with that heinous, and worst of womens Crimes, Hypocrisie; nay, in spite of Misfortunes or Age, you are the same Woman still; though most of your Sex grow *Magdalens* at Fifty, and as a solid *French* Author has it.

*Apres le plaisir, vien't la peine,
Apres la peine la vertu;*

But sure an old Sinner's Continency is much like a Gamester's forswearing play, when he had lost all his Money; and Modesty is a kind of a youthful Dress, which, as it makes a young Woman more amiable, makes an old one more nauseous; a bashful

The Epistle Dedicatory.

ful old Woman is like an hopeful old Man; and the affected Chastity of antiquated Beauties is rather a Reproach than an Honour to 'em, for it shews the Mens Viirtue only, not theirs. But you, in fine, Madam, are no more a Hypocrite than I am when I praise you; therefore I doubt not will be thought (even by yours and the Play's Enemies, the nicest Ladies) to be the fittest Patroness for, Madam,

Your Ladyship's most obedient,

faithful, humble Servant, and

The Plain-Dealer.



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PROLOGUE.

I The Plain-Dealer am to act to day,
And my rough part begins before the play.
First, you who scribble, yet hate all that write,
And keep each other company in spite,
As rivals in your common mistress, same,
And with faint praises, one another damn :
'Tis a good play, we know, you can't forgive,
But grudge your selves the pleasure you receive ;
Our scribbler therefore bluntly bid me say,
He wou'd not have the wits pleas'd here to day.
Next, you, the fine, loud gentlemen, o'th' pit,
Who damn all plays ; yet, if y'ave any wit,
'Tis but what here you sponge, and daily get ;
Poets, like friends to whom you are in debt,
You hate ; and so rooks laugh, to see undone
Those pushing gamesters whom they live upon.
Well, you are sparks ; and still will be i'th' fashion ;
Rail then at plays, to hide your obligation.
Now, you shrewd judges, who the boxes sway,
Leading the ladies hearts and sense astray,
And, for their sakes, see all, and hear no play ;
Correct your cravats, foretops, lock behind ;
The dress and breeding of the play ne'er mind.
Plain-Dealing is, you'ld say, quite out of fashion ;
You'll hate it here, as in a dedication.
And your fair neighbours, in a limning poet,
No more than in a painter will allow it.
Pictures too like, the ladies will not please ;
They must be drawn too here like goddesses.
You, as at Lely's too, wou'd truncheon wield,
And look like heroes, in a painted field ;
But the course dauber of the coming scenes,
To follow life, and nature's only means,

Dis-

PROLOGUE.

*Displays you, as you are, makes his fine woman
 A mercenary jilt, and true to no man :
 His men of wit, and pleasure of the age,
 Are as dull rogues, as ever cumber'd stage :
 He draws a friend, only to custom just,
 And makes him naturally break his trust.
 I only act a part, like none of you,
 And yet, you'll say, it is a fool's part too :
 An honest man, who like you, never winks
 At faults; but unlike you, speaks what he thinks :
 The only fool, who ne'er found patron yet,
 For truth is now a fault as well as wit.
 And where else, but on stages, do we see
 Truth pleasing, or rewarded honesty ?
 Which our bold poet does this day in me,
 If not to th' honest, be to th' prosperous kind,
 Some friends at court let the Plain Dealer find.*

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EPILOGUE.

TO you the judges learned in stage-laws,
 Our poet now, by me, submits his cause ;
 For with young judges, such as most of you,
 The men, by women best, their business do :
 And, truth on't is, if you did not sit here,
 To keep for us a term throughout the year,
 We cou'd not live by'r tongues : Nay, but for you,
 Our chamber-practice wou'd be little too.
 And 'tis not only the stage-practicer
 Who, by your meeting, gets her living here :
 For, as in hall of Westminster,
 Sleek sempstress vents, amidst the courts, her ware ;
 So, while we bawl, and you in judgment sit,
 The visor-mask sells linen too i'th' pit.
 O, many of your friends, besides us here,
 Do live by putting off their sev'ral ware.

Here's

EPILOGUE.

Here's daily done the great affair o'th' nation;
Let love and us then ne'er have long vacation.
But hold; like other pleaders, I have done
Not my poor client's bus'ness, but my own.
Spare me a word then, now, for him. First know,
Squires of the long robe, he does humbly show;
He has a just right in abusing you,
Because he is a Brother-Templer too:
For at the bar you rally one another;
Nay, Fool and knave, is swallow'd from a brother:
If not the poet here, the Templer spare,
And maul him, when you catch him at the bar.
From you, our common modish censurers,
Your favour, not your judgment, 'tis he fears,
Of all love begs you then to rail, find fault;
For plays, like women, by the world are thought
(When you speak kindly of 'em) very naught.



D R A M A.

Dramatis Personæ.

MANLY, Of an honest, surly, nice Humour, suppos'd first in the Time of the *Dutch War*, to have procur'd the Command of a ship, out of Honour, not Interest; and chusing a Sea-Life only to avoid the World.

FREEMAN, *Manly's* Lieutenant, a Gentleman well educated, but of a broken Fortune, a Complicter with the Age.

VERNISH, *Manly's* Bosom and only Friend.

NOVEL, A pert railing Coxcomb, and an Admirer of Novelties, makes Love to *Olivia*.

MAYOLDFOX, An old impertinent Fop, given to Scribbling, makes Love to the *Wid. Blackacre*.

LD PLAUSIBLE, A ceremonious, supple, commending Coxcomb, in Love with *Olivia*.

JERBLACKACRE, A true raw Squire, under Age, and his Mother's Government, bred to the Law.

W O M E N.

OLIVIA, *Manly's* Mistress.

FIDELIA, In love with *Manly*, and follow'd him to Sea in Man's Clothes.

ELIZA, Cousin, to *Olivia*.

LETTICE, *Olivia's* Woman.

WID. BLACKACRE, A petulant, litigious Widow, always in Law, and Mother to Squire Jerry.

Lawyers, Knights of the Post, Bayliffs, and Aldermen, a Bookseller's Apprentice, a Foot-Boy, Sailors, Waiters, and Attendants.

The SCENE L O N D O N.

THE



T H E
Plain Dealer.

A C T I. S C E N E I.

Captain Manly's Lodging.

Enter Captain Manly furlily, and my Lord Plausible following him ; and two Sailors behind.

Manly.



ELL not me (my good lord *Plausible*) of your *Decorums*, supercilious forms, and slavish ceremonies ; your little tricks, which you, the spaniels of the world, do daily over and over, for and to one another ; not out of love or duty, but your servile fear.

L. Plaus. Nay, i'faith, i'faith, you are too passionate ; and I must humbly beg your pardon, and leave to tell you, they are the arts and rules the prudent of the world walk by.

Man.

Man. Let 'em. But I'll have no leading strings ; I can walk alone : I hate a harness, and will not tug on in a faction, kissing my leader behind, that another slave may do the like to me.

L. Plaus. What, will you be singular then, like no body ? follow love, and esteem no body ?

Man. Rather than be general, like you, follow every body ; court and kiss every body, tho' perhaps at the same time you hate every body.

L. Plaus. Why, seriously with your pardon, my dear friend —

Man. With your pardon, my no friend, I will not, as you do, whisper my hatred or my scorn ; call a man fool or knave by signs or mouths over his shoulder, whilst you have him in your arms : for such as you, like common whores and pickpockets, are only dangerous to those you embrace.

L. Plaus. Such as I ! Heavens defend me — upon my honour —

Man. Upon your title, my lord, if you'd have me believe you.

L. Plaus. Well then, as I am a person of honour, I never attempted to abuse or lessen any person in my life.

Man. What, you were afraid ?

L. Plaus. No ; but, seriously, I hate to do a rude thing : no, faith, I speak well of all mankind.

Man. I thought so : but know, that speaking well of all mankind is the worst kind of detraction ; for it takes away the reputation of the few good men in the world, by making all alike. Now I speak ill of most men, because they deserve it ; I that can do a rude thing, rather than an unjust thing.

L. Plaus. Well, tell not me, my dear friend, what people deserve ; I ne'er mind that : I, like an author in a dedication, never speak well of a man for his sake, but my own ; I will not disparage any man, to disparage my self : for to speak ill of people behind their backs, is not like a person of honour ; and truly, to speak ill of 'em to their faces, is not like a

com-

complaisant person. But if I did say or do an ill thing to any body, it shou'd be sure to be behind their backs, out of pure good manners.

Man. Very well ; but I, that am an unmannerly sea-fellow, if I ever speak well of people, (which is very seldom indeed) it shou'd be sure to be behind their backs ; and if I wou'd say or do ill to any, it shou'd be to their faces. I wou'd juttle a proud, strutting, over-looking coxcomb, at the head of his sycophants, rather than put out my tongue at him when he were past me ; wou'd frown in the arrogant, big, dull face of an over-grown knave of business, rather than vent my spleen against him when his back were turn'd ; wou'd give fawning slaves the lye whilst they embrace or commend me ; cowards whilst they brag ; call a rascal by no other title, tho his father had left him a duke's ; laugh at fools aloud before their mistresses ; and must desire people to leave me, when their visits grow at last as troublesome as they were at first impertinent.

L. Plauf. I wou'd not have my visits troublesome.

Man. The only way to be sure not to have 'em troublesome ; is to make 'em when people are not at home ; for your visits, like other good turns, are most obliging, when made or done to a man in his absence. A pox, why wou'd any one, because he has nothing to do, go and disturb another man's business ?

L. Plauf. I beg your pardon, my dear friend. What, you have business ?

Man. If you have any, I wou'd not detain your lordship.

L. Plauf. Detain me, dear sir ; I can never have enough of your company.

Man. I'm afraid I shou'd be tiresome : I know not what you think.

L. Plauf. Well, dear sir, I see you'd have me gone.

Man. But I see you won't.

(*Aside.*

L. Plauf. Your most faithful——

Man. God be w'ye, my lord.

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L. Plauf.

The Plain Dealer.

L. Plauf. Your most humble——

Man. Farewel.

L. Plauf. And eternally——

Man. And eternally ceremony—— then the devil take thee eternally. (*Aside.*)

L. Plauf. You shall use no ceremony, by my life.

Man. I do not intend it.

L. Plauf. Why do you stir then ?

Man. Only to see you out of doors, that I may shut 'em against more welcomes.

L. Plauf. Nay, faith, that shall not pass upon your most faithful humble servant.

Man. Nor this any more upon me. (*Aside.*)

L. Plauf. Well, you are too strong for me.

Man. I'd sooner be visited by the plague ; for that only wou'd keep a man from visits, and his doors shut. (*Aside.*)

(*Exit, thrusting out my lord Plaausible. Manent Sailors.*)

1 Sail. Here's a finical fellow, *Jack!* what a brave fair-weather captain of a ship he wou'd make ?

2 Sail. He a captain of a ship ! it must be when she's in the dock then ; for he looks like one of those that get the king's commissions for hulls to sell a king's ship, when a brave fellow has fought her almost to a long-boat.

1 Sail. On my conscience then, *Jack,* that's the reason our bully *Tar* sunk our ship ; not only that the *Dutch* might not have her, but that the courtiers, who laugh at wooden legs, might not make her prize.

2 Sail. A pox of his sinking, *Tom ;* we have made a base, broken, short voyage of it.

1 Sail. Ay, your brisk dealers in honour always make quick returns with their ships to the dock, and their men to the hospitals : 'tis, let me see, just a month since we set out of the river, and the wind was almost as cross to us as the *Dutch.*

2. Sail. Well, I forgive him sinking my own poor truck, if he wou'd but have given me time and leave to have sav'd black *Kate* of *Wapping's* small venture.

1 Sail.

1 *Sail.* Faith, I forgive him, since, as the purser told me, he sunk the value of five or six thousand pound of his own, with which he was to settle himself somewhere in the *Indies*; for our merry lieutenant was to succeed him in his commission for the ship back; for he was resolv'd never to return again for *England*.

2 *Sail.* So it seem'd by his fighting.

1 *Sail.* No; but he was a-weary of this side of the world here, they say.

2. *Sail.* Ay, or else he wou'd not have bid so fair for a passage into t'other.

1 *Sail.* *Jack*, thou think'st thy self in the fore-castle, thou'rt so waggish: but I tell you then, he had a mind to go live and bask himself on the sunny side of the globe.

2 *Sail.* What, out of any discontent? for he's always as dogged as an old tarpaulin, when hinder'd of a voyage by a young pantaloon captain.

1 *Sail.* 'Tis true, I never saw him pleas'd but in the fight; and then he look'd like one of us coming from the pay-table, with a new lining to our hats under our arms.

2. *Sail.* A pox, he's like the bay of *Biscay*, rough and angry, let the wind blow where 'twill.

1 *Sail.* Nay there's no more dealing with him, than with the land in a storm, no-near——

2 *Sail.* 'Tis a hurry-durry blade; dost thou remember after we had tugg'd hard the old leaky long boat to save his life, when I welcom'd him ashore, he gave me a box on the ear, and call'd me sawning water-dog.

Enter Manly and Freeman.

1 *Sail.* Hold thy peace *Jack*, and stand by; the foul weather's coming.

Man. You rascals, dogs, how cou'd this tame thing get through you?

1 *Sail.* Faith, to tell your honour the Truth, we were at hob in the hall, and whilst my brother and I were a quarrelling about a cast, he sunk by us.

2 *Sail.* He's a sneaking fellow I warrant for't.

Man. Have more care for the future, you slaves: go, and with drawn cutlashes stand at the stair-foot, and keep all that ask for me from coming up; suppose you were guarding the scuttle to the powder-room. Let none enter here, at your and their peril.

1 *Sail.* No; for the danger wou'd be the same: you wou'd blow them and us up, if we shou'd.

2. *Sail.* Must no one come to you, sir?

Man. No man, sir.

1 *Sail.* No man, sir; but a woman then, an't like your honour——

Man. No woman neither, you impertinent dog. Wou'd you be pimping? a sea pimp is the strangest monster she has.

2. *Sail.* Indeed, an't like your honour, 'twill be hard for us to deny a woman any thing, since we are so newly come on shore.

1 *Sail.* We'll let no old woman come up, tho it were our trusting landlady at *Wapping*.

Man. Wou'd you be witty, you brandy casks you? you become a jest as ill as you do a horse. Be gone, you dogs; I hear a noise on the stairs. [*Exit Sailors.*]

Free. Faith, I am sorry you wou'd let the fop go, I intended to have had some sport with him.

Man. Sport with him! a pox then, why did you not stay? You shou'd have enjoy'd your coxcomb, and had him to your self for me.

Free. No, I shou'd not have car'd for him without you neither; for the pleasure which fops afford is like that of drinking, only good when 'tis shar'd; and a fool, like a bottle, which wou'd make you merriness in company, will make you dull alone. But how the devil cou'd you turn a man of his quality down stairs? you use a lord with very little ceremony it seems.

Man. A lord! what, thou art one of those who esteem men only by the marks and value fortune has set upon 'em, and never consider intrinsick worth; but counterfeit honour will not be current with me:

The Plain Dealer.

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I weigh the man, not his title; 'tis not the king's stamp can make the metal better or heavier. Your lord is a leaden shilling, which you bend every way, and debases the stamp he bears, instead of being rais'd by it. Here again, you slaves?

Enter Sailors.

1 *Sail.* Only to receive farther instructions, an't like your honour: what if a man shou'd bring you money, should we turn him back?

Man. All men, I say: must I be pester'd with you too? you dogs away.

2 *Sail.* Nay, I know one man your honour wou'd not have us hinder coming to you, I'm sure.

Man. Who's that? speak quickly, slaves.

2 *Sail.* Why, a man that shou'd bring you a challenge: for though you refuse money, I'm sure you love fighting too well to refuse that.

Man. Rogue, rascal, dog.

[Kicks the Sailors out.]

Free. Nay, let the poor rogues have their forecassle jests: they cannot help 'em in a fight, scarce when the ship's sinking.

Man. Damn their untimely jests: a servant's jest is more sauciness than his counsel.

Free. But what, will you see no body? not your friends?

Man. Friends—— I have but one, and he, I hear, is not in town; nay, can have but one friend, for a true heart admits but of one friendship, as of one love. But in having that friend, I have a thousand; for he has the courage of men in despair, yet the diffidence and caution of cowards; the secrecy of the revengeful, and the constancy of martyrs; one fit to advise; to keep a secret, to fight and die for his friend. Such I think him; for I have trusted him with my mistress in my absence: and the trust of beauty is sure the greatest we can shew.

Free. Well, but all your good thoughts are not for him alone, I hope? pray what d'ye think of me for a friend?

Man.

Man. Of thee! why, thou art a *Latitudinarian* in friendship, that is, no friend: thou dost side with all mankind, but wilt suffer for none. Thou art indeed like your lord *Plausible*, the pink of courtesy, therefore hast no friendship: for ceremony and great professing renders friendship as much suspected, as it does religion.

Free. And no professing, no ceremony at all in friendship, were as unnatural and as undecent as in religion: and there is hardly such a thing as an honest hypocrite, who professes himself to be worse than he is, unless it be your self; for tho I could never get you to say you were my friend, I know you'll prove so.

Man. I must confess, I'm so much your friend, I wou'd not deceive you; therefore must tell you, not only because my heart is taken up, but according to your rules of friendship, I cannot be your friend.

Free. Why, pray?

Man. Because he that is, you'll say, a true friend to a man, is a friend to all his friends: but you must pardon me, I cannot wish well to pimps, flatterers, detractors, and cowards, stiff-nodding knaves, and supple, pliant, kissing fools. Now, all these I have seen you use like the dearest friends in the world.

Free. Ha, ha, ha,— what, you observ'd me, I warrant, in the galleries at *Whitehall*, doing the business of the place? pshaw, court-professions, like court-promises, go for nothing, man. But, faith, cou'd you think I was a friend to all those I hugg'd, kiss'd, flatter'd, bow'd to? Ha, ha——

Man. You told 'em so, and swore it too: I heard you.

Free. Ay; but when their backs were turn'd, did not I tell you they were rogues, villains, rascals, whom I despis'd and hated?

Man. Very fine! but what reason had I to believe you spoke your heart to me, since you profess'd deceiving so many?

Free.

Free. Why, don't you know, good captain, that telling truth is a quality as prejudicial to a man that wou'd thrive in the world, as square play to a cheat, or true love to a whore? wou'd you have a man speak truth to his ruin? you are severer than the law, which requires no man to swear against himself: you wou'd have me speak truth against my self, I warrant, and tell my promising friend the courtier, he has a bad memory?

Man. Yes.

Free. And so make him remember to forget my business? And I shou'd tell the great Lawyer too, that he takes oftner fees to hold his tongue, than to speak?

Man. No doubt on't.

Free. Ay, and have him hang or ruin me, when he shou'd come to be a judge, and I before him? and you wou'd have me tell the new officer, who bought his employment lately, that he is a coward?

Man. Ay.

Free. And so get my self cashier'd, not him, he having the better friends, tho' I the better sword? and I shou'd tell the scribler of honour, that heraldry were a prettier and fitter study for so fine a gentleman than poetry?

Man. Certainly.

Free. And so find my self maul'd in his next hir'd lampoon? and you wou'd have me tell the holy lady too, she lies with her chaplain?

Man. No doubt on't.

Free. And so draw the clergy upon my back, and want a good table to dine at sometimes? and by the same reason too, I shou'd tell you that the world thinks you a mad man, a brutal, and have you cut my throat, or worse, hate me. What other good success of all my *Plain-Dealing* cou'd I have, than what I've mention'd?

Man. Why, first, your promising courtier wou'd keep his word out of fear of more reproaches; or at least wou'd give you no more vain hopes: your lawyer wou'd serve you more faithfully; for he, having
no.

no honour but his interest, is truest still to him he *Man*
 knows suspects him: the new officer wou'd provoke were
 thee to make him a coward, and so be cashier'd, that be as
 thou, or some other honest fellow, who had more ship
 courage than money, might get his place: the noble *Free*
 sonnetteer wou'd trouble thee no more with his ma. *Ma*
 drigals: the praying lady wou'd leave off railing at a shev
 wenching before thee, and not turn away her cham- *Fre*
 ber-maid for her own known frailty with thee: and hind
 I, instead of hating thee, shou'd love thee for thy *Ma*
Plain Dealing; and in lieu of being mortify'd, am were
 proud that the world and I think not well of one goes
 another. are g

Free. Well, doctors differ. You are for *Plain Dea-*
ling, I find: but against your particular notions, I But
 have the practice of the whole world. Observe but doft
 any morning what people do when they get together tier,
 on the *Exchange*, in *Westminster Hall*, or the galleries *F*
 in *Whitehall*. capt

Man. I must confess there they seem to rehearse *N*
Bays's grand dance: here you see a bishop bowing low *H*
 to a gaudy atheist; a judge to a door-keeper; a great wel
 lord to a fishmonger, or scrivener with a jack chain
 about his neck; a lawyer to a serjeant at arms; a sha
 velvet physician to a thread-bare chymist; and a sup- lyi
 ple gentleman usher to a surly beef-eater: and so tread lo
 round in a preposterous huddle of ceremony to each w
 other, whilst they can hardly hold their solemn false er
 countenances. fla

Free. Well, they understand the world.

Man. Which I do not, I confess.

Free. But, sir, pray believe the friendship I promise
 you real, whatsoever I have profess'd to others: try
 me, at least.

Man. Why, what wou'd you do for me?

Free. I wou'd fight for you.

Man. That you wou'd do for your own honour;
 but what else?

Free. I wou'd lend you money, if I had it.

Man,

The Plain Dealer.

II

Man. To borrow more of me another time, that were putting your money to interest; an usurer wou'd be as good a friend. But what other piece of friendship?

Free. I wou'd speak well of you to your enemies.

Man. To encourage others to be your friends, by a shew of gratitude. But what else?

Free. Nay, I wou'd not hear you ill spoken of behind your back by my friend.

Man. Nay, then thou'r't a friend indeed: but it were unreasonable to expect it from thee, as the world goes now; when new friends, like new mistresses, are got by disparaging old ones.

Enter Fidelity.

But here comes another, will say as much at least: dost thou not love me devilishly too, my little volunteer, as well as he, or any man can?

Fid. Better than any man can love you, my dear captain.

Man. Look you there, I told you so.

Fid. As well as you do truth or honour, sir, as well.

Man. Nay, good young gentleman, enough, for shame: thou hast been a page, by thy flattering and lying, to one of those praying ladies, who love flattery so well, they are jealous of it; and wer't turn'd away for saying the same things to the old house-keeper for sweet meats, as you did to your lady; for thou flatterest every thing, and every body alike.

Fid. You, dear sir, shou'd not suspect the truth of what I say of you, though to you: fame, the old liar, is believ'd when she speaks wonders of you; you cannot be flatter'd, sir, your merit is unspeakable.

Man. Hold, hold, sir, or I shall suspect worse of you, that you have been a cushion-bearer to some state hypocrite, and turn'd away by the chaplains, for out-flattering their probation sermons for a benefice.

Fid.

Fid. Suspect me for any thing, sir, but the want of love, faith and duty to you, the bravest, worthiest of mankind; believe me, I could die for you, sir.

Man. Nay, there you lye, sir; did not I see thee more afraid in the fight, than the chaplain of the ship or the purser that bought his place?

Fid. Can he be said to be afraid, that ventures to sea with you?

Man. Fie, fie, no more, I shall hate thy flattery worse than thy cowardice, nay, than thy bragging.

Fid. Well, I own then I was afraid; mightily afraid: yet for you I wou'd be afraid again, an hundred times afraid, dying is ceasing to be afraid, and that I cou'd do sure for you, and you'll believe me one day. [Weeps.]

Free. Poor youth! believe his eyes if not his tongue: he seems to speak truth with them.

Man. What, does he cry? a pox on't, a maudlin flatterer is as nauseously troublesome as a maudlin drunkard; no more, you little milk-sop, do not cry, I'll never make thee afraid again; for of all men, if I had occasion, thou shou'dst not be my second; and when I go to sea again, thou shalt venture thy life no more with me.

Fid. Why, will you leave me behind then? If you wou'd preserve my life, I'm sure you shou'd not. [Aside.]

Man. Leave thee behind! Ay, ay, thou art a hopeful youth for the shore only; here thou wilt live to be cherish'd by fortune, and the great ones; for thou may'st easily come to out-flatter a dull poet, out-lie a coffee-house, or gazet-writer, out-swear a knight of the post, out-watch a pimp, out-fawn a Rook, out-promise a lover, out-rail a wit, and out-brag a sea-captain: all this thou canst do, because thou'rt a coward, a thing I hate; therefore thou'lt do better with the world than with me, and these are the good courses you must take in the world. There's good advice, at least, at parting, go, and be happy with'r.

Fid. Parting, sir! O let me not hear that dismal word.

Man.

Man. If my words frighten thee, be gone the sooner; for to be plain with thee, cowardice and I cannot dwell together.

Fid. And cruelty and courage never dwelt together sure, sir. Do not turn me off to shame and misery, for I am helpless and friendless.

Man. Friendless! there are half a score friends for thee then, [*Offers her gold*] I leave my self no more: they'll help thee a little. Be gone, go, I must be cruel to thee (if thou call'st it so) out of pity.

Fid. If you wou'd be cruelly pitiful, sir, let it be with your sword, not gold. [*Exit.*]

Enter first Sailor.

1. *Sail.* We have, with much ado, turn'd away two gentlemen, who told us forty times over, their names were Mr. *Novel*, and major *Oldfox*.

Man. Well, to your post again. [*Exit Sailor.*] But how comes those puppies coupled always together?

Free. O, the coxcombs keep each other company, to shew each other, as *Novel* calls it; or as *Oldfox* says, like two knives to whet one another.

Man. And set other peoples teeth an edge.

Enter second Sailor.

2. *Sail.* Here is a woman, an't like your honour, scolds and bustles with us, to come in, as much as a seaman's widow at the Navy Office: her name is Mrs. *Blackacre*.

Man. That fiend too!

Free. The widow *Blackacre*, is it not? that litigious she-petty-fogger, who is at law and difference with all the world; but I wish I cou'd make her agree with me in the church: they say she has fifteen hundred pounds a year jointure, and the care of her son, that is, the destruction of his estate.

Man. Her lawyers, attorneys and solicitors, have fifteen hundred pounds a year, whilst she is contented to be poor, to make other people so; for she is as vexatious as her father was, the great attorney, nay, as a dozen *Norfolk* attorneys, and as implacable an adversary, as a wife suing for alimony, or a parson

son for his tythes; and she loves an *Easter* term, or any term, not as other country ladies do, to come up to be fine, cuckold their husbands, and take their pleasure; for she has no pleasure but in vexing others, and is usually cloth'd and daggled like a bawd in disguise, pursu'd through alleys by serjeants. When she is in town, she lodges in one of the inns of chancery, where she breeds her son, and is her self his tutoress in law *French*; and for her country abode, tho' she has no estate there, she chuses *Norfolk*. But bid her come in, with a pox to her; she is *Olivia's* kinswoman, and may make me amends for her visit, by some discourse of that dear woman. [Exit Sailor.

Enter widow Blackacre with a mantle, and a green bag, and several papers in the other hand: Jerry Blackacre, her son, in a gown, laden with green bags, following her.

Wid. I never had so much to do with a judge's door-keeper, as with yours; but——

Man. But the incomparable *Olivia*, how does she since I went?

Wid. Since you went, my suit——

Man. *Olivia*, I say, is she well?

Wid. My suit, if you had not return'd——

Man. Damn your suit, how does your cousin *Olivia*?

Wid. My suit, I say I had been quite lost; but now——

Man. But now where is *Olivia*? in town? for——

Wid. For to-morrow we are to have a hearing.

Man. Wou'd you wou'd let me have a hearing to day.

Wid. But why won't you hear me?

Man. I am no judge, and you talk of nothing but suits; but, pray tell me, when did you see *Olivia*?

Wid. I am no visitor, but a woman of business; or if I ever visit, 'tis only the *Chancery-lane* ladies, ladies towards the law; and not any of your lazy, good-for-nothing flirts, who cannot read law *French*, tho' a gallant writ it. But, as I was telling you my suit——

Man.

Man. Damn these impertinent, vexatious people of business, of all sexes; they are still troubling the world with the tedious recitals of their law-suits: and one can no more stop their mouths than a wit's, when he talks of himself; or an intelligencer's, when he talks of other people.

Wid. And a pox of all vexatious, impertinent lovers; they are still perplexing the world with the tedious narrations of their love-suits, and discourses of their mistresses: you are as troublesome to a poor widow of business, as a young coxcomby rhiming lover.

Man. And thou art as troublesome to me, as a rook to a losing gamester, or a young putter of cases to his mistress or sempstress, who has love in her head for another.

Wid. Nay, since you talk of putting of cases, and will not hear me speak, hear our *Jerry* a little; let him put our case to you, for the tryal's to-morrow; and since you are my chief witness, I wou'd have your memory refresh'd, and your judgment inform'd, that you may not give your evidence improperly. Speak out, child.

Jer. Yes, forsooth. Hem! hem! *John-a-Stiles*.—

Man. You may talk, young lawyer, but I shall no more mind you, than a hungry judge does a cause, after the clock has struck one.

Free. Nay, you'll find him as pcevisish too.

Wid. No matter. *Jerry*, go on. Do you observe it then, sir, for I think I have seen in a gown once. Lord, I cou'd hear our *Jerry* put cases all day long. Mark him, sir.

Jer. *John-a-Stiles*—— no—— there are first, *Fitz*, *Pere*, and *Ayle*; —— no, no, *Ayle*, *Pere*, and *Fitz*; *Ayle* is seiz'd in fee of *Blackacre*; *John-a-Stiles* disseises *Ayle*; *Ayle* makes claim, and the disseisor dies; then the *Ayle*—— no, the *Fitz*.

Wid. No, the *Pere*, sirrah.

Jer. O, the *Pere*: ay, the *Pere*, sir, and the *Fitz*—— no, the *Ayle*; no, the *Pere* and the *Fitz*, sir, and——

Man.

Man. Damn *Pere*, *Mere*, and *Fitz*, sir.

Wid. No, you are out, Child; hear me, captain, then; there are *Ayle*, *Pere* and *Fitz*; *Ayle* is seized in fee of *Blackacre*; and being so seized, *John-a-Style* disseises the *Ayle*, *Ayle* makes claim, and the disseisor dies; and then the *Pere* re-enters, the *Pere*, sirrah, the *Pere*—— [to *Jerry*.] and the *Fitz* enters upon the *Pere*, and the *Ayle* brings his writ of disseizin, in the *Post*; and the *Pere* brings his writ of disseizin, in the *Pere*, and——

Man. Canst thou hear this stuff, *Freeman*? I cou'd as soon suffer a whole noise of flatterers at a great man's levy in a morning; but thou hast servile complacency enough to listen to a quibbling statesman in disgrace, nay, and be beforehand with him, in laughing at his dull no Jest; but I——

[Offering to go out.

Wid. Nay, sir, hold. Where's the *Sub-pena*, *Jerry*? I must serve you, sir. You are requir'd by this, to give your testimony——

Man. I'll be forsworn, to be reveng'd on thee.

[Exit *Man*ly throwing away the *Sub-pena*.]

Wid. Get you gone, for a lawless companion. Come, *Jerry*, I had almost forgot, we were to meet at the masters at three: let us mind our business still, child.

Jer. I, forsooth, e'en so let's.

Free. Nay, madam, now, I wou'd beg you to hear me a little, a little of my business.

Wid. I have business of my own calls me away, sir.

Free. My business wou'd prove your's too, dear madam.

Wid. Yours wou'd be some sweet business, I warrant: what, 'tis no *Westminster-Hall* business? wou'd you have my advice?

Free. No, faith, 'tis a little *Westminster-Abby* business: I wou'd have your consent.

Wid. O fie, fie, sir, to me such discourse, before my dear minor there!

Jer.

Jer. Ay, ay, mother, he wou'd be taking livery and seisin of your jointure, by digging the turf; but I'll watch your waters, bully, i'fac. Come, away, mother.

(Exit Jerry, hauling away his Mother.

Manet Freeman : Enter to him Fidelia.

Fid. Dear sir, you have pity; beget but some in our captain for me.

Free. Where is he?

Fid. Within; swearing as much as he did in the great storm, and cursing you, and sometimes sinks into calms and sighs, and talks of his *Olivia*.

Free. He wou'd never trust me to see her: is she handsome?

Fid. No, if you'll take my word: but I am not a proper judge.

Free. What is she?

Fid. A gentlewoman, I suppose, but of as mean a fortune as beauty; but her relations wou'd not suffer her to go with him to the *Indies*: and his aversion to this side of the world, together with the late opportunity of commanding the convoy, wou'd not let him stay here longer, tho to enjoy her.

Free. He loves her mightily then.

Fid. Yes, so well, that the remainder of his fortune (I hear about five or six thousand pounds) he has left her, in case he had dy'd by the way, or before she cou'd prevail with her friends to follow him; which he expected she shou'd do, and has left behind him his great bosom-friend to be her convoy to him.

Free. What charms has she for him, if she be not handsome?

Fid. He fancies her, I suppose, the only woman of truth and sincerity in the world.

Free. No common beauty, I confess.

Fid. Or else sure he wou'd not have trusted her with so great a share of his fortune, in his absence, I suppose (since his late loss) all he has.

Free. Why, has he left it in her own custody?

Fid. I am told so.

Free.

Free. Then he has shew'd love to her indeed, leaving her like an old husband that dies as soon as he has made his wife a good jointure ; but I'll go to him, and speak for you, and know more from him of his *Olivia*. (Exit)

Manet Fidelia sola.

Fid. His *Olivia* indeed, his happy *Olivia* ! Yet she was left behind, when I was with him ; But she was ne'er out of his mind or heart. She has told him she lov'd him ; I have shew'd it, And durst not tell him so, till I had done, Under this habit, such convincing acts Of loving friendship for him, that through it He first might find out both my sex and love ; And, when I'd had him from his fair *Olivia*, And this bright world of artful beauties here, Might then have hop'd, he wou'd have look'd on me, Amongst the sooty *Indians* ; and I cou'd, To choose, there live his wife, where wives are forc'd

To live no longer, when their husbands die ; Nay, what's yet worse, to share 'em whilst they live, With many rival wives. But here he comes, And I must yet keep out of his sight, not To lose it for ever. (Exit)

Enter Manly and Freeman.

Free. But pray what strange charms has she that cou'd make you love ?

Man. Strange charms indeed ! she has beauty enough to call in question her wit or virtue, and her form wou'd make a starv'd hermit a ravisher ; yet her virtue and conduct, wou'd preserve her from the subtil lust of a pamper'd prelate. She is so perfect a beauty that art could not better it, nor affectation deform it ; yet all this is nothing, her tongue as well as face ne'er knew artifice : nor ever did her words or looks contradict her heart : she is all truth, and hates the lying, masking, daubing world, as I do ; for which I love her, and for which I think she dislikes not me : for she has often shut out of her conversation

versation for mine, the gaudy fluttering parrots of the town, apes and eccho's of men only, and refus'd their common place pert chat, flattery and submissions, to be entertain'd with my sullen bluntness, and honest love: and, last of all, swore to me, since her parents wou'd not suffer her to go with me, she wou'd stay behind for no other man; but follow me without their leave, if not to be obtain'd. Which oath——

Free. Did you think she wou'd keep?

Man. Yes; for she is not (I tell you) like other women, but can keep her promise, tho' she has sworn to keep it; but, that she might the better keep it, I left her the value of five or six thousand pounds: for womens wants are generally the most importunate solicitors to love or marriage.

Free. And money summons lovers, more than beauty, and augments but their importunity, and their number; so makes it the harder for a woman to deny 'em. For my part, I am for the *French* maxim, if you wou'd have your female subjects loyal, keep 'em poor: but, in short, that your mistress may not marry, you have given her a portion.

Man. She had given me her heart first, and I am satisfied with the security; I can never doubt her truth and constancy.

Free. It seems you do, since you are fain to bribe it with money. But how come you to be so diffident of the man that says he loves you, and not doubt the woman that says it?

Man. I shou'd (I confess) doubt the love of any other woman but her, as I do the friendship of any other man but him I have trusted; but I have such proofs of their faith, as cannot deceive me.

Free. Cannot!

Man. Not but I know, that generally, no man can be a great enemy, but under the name of friend; and if you are a cuckold, it is your friend only that makes you so; for your enemy is not admitted to your house: if you are cheated in your fortune, 'tis

your friend that does it; for your enemy is not made your trustee: if your honour, or good name be injur'd, 'tis your friend that does it still, because your enemy is not believ'd against you. Therefore I rather chuse to go where honest, downright barbarity is profess'd, where men devour one another like generous hungry lions and tygers, not like crocodiles; where they think the devil white, of our complexion; and I am already so far an *Indian*: but if your weak faith doubts this miracle of a woman, come along with me, and believe, and thou wilt find her so handsom, that thou, who art so much my friend, wilt have a mind to lie with her, and so wilt not fail to discover what her faith and thine is to me.

*When we're in love, the great adversity,
Our friends and mistresses at once we try.*

ACT II. SCENE I.

Olivia's Lodging.

Enter Olivia, Eliza, Lettice.

Olivia.

AH cousin, what a world 'tis we live in! I am so weary of it!

Eliz. Truly, cousin, I can find no fault with it, but that we cannot always live in't; for I can never be weary of it.

Oliv. O hideous! you cannot be in earnest sure, when you say you like the filthy world.

Eliz. You cannot be in earnest sure, when you say you dislike it.

Oliv. You are a very censorious creature, I find.

Eliz. I must confess, I think we women as often discover where we love by railing, as men when they
lye,

ye, by their swearing ; and the world is but a constant keeping gallant, whom we fail not to quarrel with, when any thing crosses us, yet cannot part with't for our hearts.

Let. A gallant indeed, madam, whom ladies first make jealous, and then quarrel with it for being so ; for if, by her indiscretion, a lady be talk'd of for a man, she cries presently, 'Tis a censorious world ; if by her vanity the intrigue be found out, 'Tis a prying malicious world ; if by her over-fondness the gallant proves unconstant, 'Tis a false world ; and if by niggardliness the chamber-maid tells, 'Tis a perfidious world : but that, I'm sure your ladyship cannot say of the world yet, as bad as 'tis.

Oliv. But I may say, 'Tis a very impertinent world. Hold your peace. And, cousin, if the world be a gallant, 'tis such an one as is my aversion. Pray name it no more.

Eliz. But is it possible the world, which has such variety of charms for other women, can have none for you ? let's see — first, what d'ye think of dressing and fine clothes ?

Oliv. Dressing ! fie, fie, 'tis my aversion. But come hither, you dowdy ; methinks you might have open'd this toure better : O hideous ! I cannot suffer it ! d'ye see how'r fits ?

Eliz. Well enough, cousin, if dressing be your aversion. —

Oliv. 'Tis so : and for variety of rich clothes, they are more my aversion.

Let. Ay, 'tis because your ladyship wears 'em too long ; for indeed a gown, like a gallant, grows one's aversion by having too much of it.

Oliv. Insatiable creature ! I'll be sworn I have had this not above three days, cousin, and within this month have made some six more.

Eliz. Then your aversion to 'em is not altogether so great.

Oliv. Alas ! 'tis for my woman only I wear 'em, cousin.

Let. If it be for me only, madam, pray do not wear 'em.

Eliz. But what d'ye think of visits—— balls——

Oliv. O, I detest 'em.

Eliz. Of plays?

Oliv. I abominate 'em: filthy, obscene, hideous things.

Eliz. What say you to masquerading in the winter, and *Hyde-Park* in the summer?

Oliv. Insipid pleasures I taste not.

Eliz. Nay, if you are for more solid pleasures, what think you of a rich young husband?

Oliv. O horrid! marriage! what a pleasure you have found out! I nauseate it of all things.

Let. But what does your ladieship think then of a liberal, handsome young lover?

Oliv. A handsome young fellow, you impudent! be gone out of my sight: name a handsome young fellow to me! foh, a hideous handsome young fellow I abominate. [Spits.]

Eliz. Indeed! but let's see——will nothing please you? what d'ye think of the court?

Oliv. How, the court! the court, cousin! my aversion, my aversion, my aversion of all aversions.

Eliz. How, the court! where——

Oliv. Where sincerity is a quality as out of fashion, and as unprosperous as bashfulness: I cou'd not laugh at a quibble, tho it were a fat privy councillor's; nor praise a lord's ill verses, tho I were my self the subject; nor an old lady's young looks, tho I were her woman; nor sit to a vain young *Smile-Maker*, tho he flatter'd me. In short, I cou'd not glout upon a man when he comes into a room, and laugh at him when he goes out: I cannot rail at the absent, to flatter the standersby; I——

Eliz. Well, but railing now is so common, that 'tis no more malice, but the fashion; and the absent think they are no more the worse for being rail'd at, than the

the present think they're the better for being flatter'd.
And for the court——

Oliv. Nay, do not defend the court; for you'll make me rail at it like a trusting citizen's widow.

Eliz. Or like a *Holbourn* lady, who cou'd not get in to the last ball, or was out of countenance in the drawing-room the last Sunday of her appearance there: for none rail at the court, but those who cannot get into it, or else who are ridiculous when they are there. And I shall suspect you were laugh'd at when you were last there, or wou'd be a maid of honour.

Oliv. I a maid of honour! to be a maid of honour were yet of all things my aversion.

Eliz. In what sense am I to understand you? but in fine, by the word aversion, I'm sure you dissemble; for I never knew woman yet us'd it, who did not. Come, our tongues belye our hearts more than our pocket-glasses do our faces: but methinks we ought to leave off dissembling, since 'tis grown of no use to us; for all wise observers understand us now a-days as they do dreams, almanacks, and *Dutch* gazettes, by the contrary: and a man no more believes a woman, when she says she has an aversion for him, than when she says she'll cry out.

Oliv. O filthy, hideous! peace, cousin, or your discourse will be my aversion: and you may believe me.

Eliz. Yes; for if any thing be a woman's aversion, 'tis *Plain Dealing* from another woman: and perhaps that's your quarrel to the world; for that will talk, as your woman says.

Oliv. Talk, not of me sure: for what men do I converse with? what visits do I admit?

Enter Boy.

Boy. Here's the gentleman to wait upon you, madam.

Oliv. On me! you little unthinking fop; d'ye know what you say?

Boy. Yes, madam; 'tis the gentleman that comes every day to you, who——

Oliv. Hold your peace, you heedless little animal,
and

and get you gone. This country-boy, cousin, takes my dancing-master, taylor, or the spruce milliner, for visitors.

[Exit Boy,

Let. No, madam; 'tis Mr. *Novel*, I'm sure, by his talking so loud: I know his voice too, madam.

Oliv. You know nothing, you baffle-headed stupid creature you: you wou'd make my cousin believe I receive visits. But if it be Mr. — what did you call him?

Let. Mr. *Novel*, madam: he that——

Oliv. Hold your peace; I'll hear no more of him: but if it be your Mr. — (I cannot think of his name again) I suppose he has follow'd my cousin thither.

Eliz. No, cousin, I will not rob you of the honour of the visit: 'tis to you, cousin; for I know him not.

Oliv. Nor did I ever hear of him before, upon my honour, cousin; besides, han't I told told you, that visits, and the business of visits, flattery and detraction, are my aversion? d'ye think then I wou'd admit such a coxcomb as he is? who rather than not rail, will rail at the dead, whom none speak ill of; rather than not flatter, will flatter the poets of the age, whom none will flatter; who affects novelty as much as the fashion, and is as fantastical, as changeable, and as well known as the fashion; who likes nothing but what is new, nay, wou'd chuse to have his friend, or his title a new one. In fine, he is my aversion.

Eliz. I find you do know him, cousin; at least, have heard of him.

Oliv. Yes, now I remember, I have heard of him.

Eliz. Well; but since he is such a coxcomb, for heaven's sake, let him not come up. Tell him, Mrs. *Lettice*, your lady is not within.

Oliv. No, *Lettice*, tell him, my cousin is here, and that he may come up: for notwithstanding I detest the sight of him, you may like his conversation; and tho I wou'd use him scurvily, I will not be rude to you

you in my own lodging: since he has follow'd you
hither, let him come up, I say.

Eliz. Very fine! pray let him go to the devil, I say,
for me: I know him not, nor desire it. Send him a-
way, Mrs. *Lettice*.

Oliv. Upon my word, she shan't: I must disobey
your commands, to comply with your desires. Call
him up, *Lettice*.

Eliz. Nay, I'll swear she shall not stir on that errand.
[*Holds Lettice.*

Oliv. Well then, I'll call him myself for you, since
you will have it so. Mr. *Novel*, [*Calls out at the door.*]
sir, sir.

Enter Novel.

Nov. Madam, I beg your pardon; perhaps you
were busy: I did not think you had company with you.

Eliz. Yet he comes to me, cousin! [*Aside.*

Oliv. ———Chairs there. (*They sit.*

Nov. Well; but madam, d'ye know whence I come
now?

Oliv. From some melancholy place, I warrant, sir,
since they have lost your good company.

Eliz. So!

Nov. From a place, where they have treated me at
dinner with so much civility and kindness, a pox on
'em, that I cou'd hardly get away to you, dear madam.

Oliv. You have a way with you so new and ob-
bliging, sir!

Eliz. You hate flattery, cousin.

(*Apart to Olivia.*

Nov. Nay, faith, madam, d'ye think my way new?
then you are obliging, madam. I must confess, I hate
imitation, to do any thing like other people. All that
know me, do me the honour to say, I am original,
faith. But, as I was saying, madam, I have been treat-
ed to day with all the ceremony and kindness imagi-
nable at my lady *Autum's*: but the nauseous old wo-
man at the upper end of her table——

Oliv. Revives the old *Grecian* custom, of serving in
a death's head with their banquets. *Nov.*

Nov. Ha! ha! fine, just, i'faith, nay, and new. 'Tis like eating with the ghost in the *Libertine*: she wou'd frighten a man from her dinner with her hollow invitation, and spoil one's stomach——

Oliv. To meat or women. I detest her hollow cherry cheeks: she looks like an old coach new painted; affecting an unseemly smugness, whilst she is ready to drop in pieces.

Eliz. You hate detraction, I see, cousin.

(*Apart to Olivia.*

Nov. But the silly old fury, whilst she affects to look like a woman of this age, talks——

Oliv. Like one of the last; and as passionately as an old courtier, who has out-liv'd his office.

Nov. Yes, madam; but pray let me give you her character. Then she never counts her age by the years, but——

Oliv. By the masques she has liv'd to see.

Nov. Nay then, madam, I see you think a little harmless railing too great a pleasure for any but your self; and therefore I've done.

Oliv. Nay, faith, you shall tell me who you had there at dinner.

Nov. If you wou'd hear me, madam.

Oliv. Most patiently: speak, sir.

Nov. Then, we had her daughter——

Oliv. Ay, her daughter; the very disgrace to good clothes, which she always wears but to heighten her deformity, not mend it: for she is still most splendidly, gallantly ugly, and looks like an ill piece of daubing in a rich frame.

Nov. So! but have you done with her, madam? and can you spare her to me a little now?

Oliv. Ay, ay, sir.

Nov. Then, she is like——

Oliv. She is, you'd say, like a city bride, the greater fortune, but not the greater beauty, for her dress.

Nov. Well: yet have you done, madam? then she——

Oliv. Then she bestows as unfortunately on her face all the graces in fashion, as the languishing eye, the hanging

'Tis hanging or pouting lip: but as the fool is never more provoking than when he aims at wit, the ill favour'd of our sex are never more nauseous than when they would be beauties, adding to their natural deformity the artificial ugliness of affectation.

Eliz. So, cousin, I find one may have a collection of all one's acquaintances pictures as well at your house, as at Mr. *Lely's*: only the difference is, there we find 'em much handsomer than they are, and like; here much uglier, and like: and you are the first of the profession of picture drawing I ever knew without flattery.

Oliv. I draw after the life; do no body wrong, cousin.

Eliz. No, you hate flattery and detraction.

Oliv. But Mr. *Novel*, who had you besides at dinner?

Nov. Nay, the devil take me if I tell you, unless you will allow me the privilege of railing in my turn: but, now I think on't, the women ought to be your province, as the men are mine: and you must know we had him whom——

Oliv. Him, whom——

Nov. What, invading me already? and giving the character before you know the man?

Eliz. No, that is not fair, tho it be usual.

Oliv. I beg your pardon, Mr. *Novel*, pray go on.

Nov. Then, I say, we had that familiar coxcomb, who is at home wheresoe'er he comes.

Oliv. Ay, that fool——

Nov. Nay then, madam, your servant: I'm gone. Taking the fool out of one's mouth, is worse than taking the bread out of one's mouth.

Oliv. I've done; your pardon, Mr. *Novel*: pray proceed.

Nov. I say, the rogue, that he may be the only wit in company, will let no body else talk, and——

Oliv. Ay, those fops who love to talk all themselves, are of all things my aversion.

Nov. Then you'll let me speak, madam, sure. The
rogue,

rogue, I say, will force his jest upon you: and I hate a jest that's forc'd upon a man, as much as a glass.

Eliz. Why, I hope, sir, he does not expect a man of your temperance in jesting shou'd do him reason?

Nov. What! interruption from this side too? I must then——

(Offers to rise. Olivia holds him.)

Oliv. No, sir,——you must know, cousin, that fop he means, tho he talks only to be commended, will not give you leave to do't.

Nov. But, madam——

Oliv. He a wit! hang him; he's only an adopter of straggling jests and fatherless lampoons: by the credit of which he eats at good tables, and so, like the barren beggar-woman, lives by borrow'd children.

Nov. Madam——

Oliv. And never was author of any thing but his news: but that is still all his own.

Nov. Madam, pray——

Oliv. An eternal babbler; and makes no more use of his ears, than a man that sits at a play by his mistress, or in fop-corner. He's in fine, a base detractioning fellow, and is my aversion. But who else, prithee *Mr. Novel*, was there with you? nay, you shan't stir.

Nov. I beg your pardon, madam; I cannot stay in any place where I'm not allow'd a little christian liberty of railing.

Oliv. Nay, prithee *Mr. Novel*, stay; and tho you shou'd rail at me, I wou'd hear you with patience: prithee, who else was there with you?

Nov. Your servant, madam.

Oliv. Nay, prithee tell us, *Mr. Novel*, prithee do.

Nov. We had no body else.

Oliv. Nay, faith, I know you had. Come, my lord *Plausible* was there too; who is, cousin, a ——

Eliz. You need not tell me what he is, cousin; for I know him to be a civil, good-natur'd, harmless gentleman, that speaks well of all the world, and is always in good humour; and——

Oliv. Hold, cousin, hold: I hate detraction: but

I must tell you, cousin, his civility is cowardice, his good-nature want of wit; and has neither courage or sense to rail. And for his being always in humour, 'tis because he is never dissatisfied with himself. In fine, he is my aversion; and I never admit his visits beyond my hall.

Nov. No, he visit you! damn him, cringing grinning rogue: if I shou'd see him coming up to you, I wou'd make bold to kick him down again. Ha! —

Enter my Lord Plausible.

My dear lord, your most humble servant.

(Rises and salutes Plausible, and kisses him.)

Eliz. So, I find kissing and railing succeed each other with the angry men, as well as with the angry women; and their quarrels are like love-quarrels, since absence is the only cause of them; for as soon as the man appears again, they are over. *(Aside.)*

L. Plaus. Your most faithful humble servant, generous Mr. *Novel*: and, madam, I am your eternal slave, and kiss your fair hands; which I had done sooner, according to your commands, but —

Oliv. No excuses, my lord.

Eliz. What, you sent for him then, cousin?

(Apart.)

Nov. Ha! invited!

(Aside.)

Oliv. I know you must divide your self; for your good company is too general a good to be ingross'd by any particular friend.

L. Plaus. O lord, madam, my company! your most obliged, faithful, humble servant: but I cou'd have brought you good company indeed; for I parted at your door with two of the worthiest bravest men —

Oliv. Who were they, my lord?

Nov. Who do you call the worthiest bravest men, pray?

L. Plaus. O, the wisest bravest gentlemen! men of such honour and vertue! of such good qualities! ah —

Eliz. This is a coxcomb that speaks ill of all people a different way, and libels every body with dull praise, and commonly in the wrong place; so makes his panegyrics abusive lampoons.

(Aside.)

Oliv.

Oliv. But pray let me know who they were?

L. Plausf. Ah! such patterns of heroick vertue! such—

Nov. Well; but who the devil were they?

L. Plausf. The honour of our nation! the glory of our age! ah, I cou'd dwell a twelvemonth on their praise; which indeed I might spare by telling their names: fir *John Current*, and fir *Richard Court-Title*.

Nov. *Court-Title*! ha, ha.

Oliv. And fir *John Current*! Why will you keep such a wretch company, my lord?

L. Plausf. O; madam, seriously you are a little too severe; for he is a man of unquestion'd reputation in every thing.

Oliv. Yes, because he endeavours only with the women to pass for a man of courage, and with the bullies for a wit; with the wits for a man of business, and with the men of business for a favourite at court; and at court for city-security.

Nov. And for fir *Richard*, he——

L. Plausf. He loves your choice pick'd company; persons that——

Oliv. He loves a lord indeed; but——

Nov. Pray, dear madam, let me have but a bold stroke or two at his picture: he loves a lord, as you say, tho——

Oliv. Tho he borrow'd his money, and ne'er paid him again.

Nov. And wou'd bespeak a place three days before at the back-end of a lord's coach to *Hyde park*.

L. Plausf. Nay, i'faith, i'faith, you are both too severe.

Oliv. Then, to shew yet more his passion for quality, he makes love to that fulsome coach-load of honour, my lady *Goodly*; for he's always at her lodging.

L. Plausf. Because it is the conventicle-gallant, the meeting-house of all the fair ladies, and glorious super-fine beauties of the town.

Nov. Very fine ladies! there's first——

Oliv. Her honour, as far as an hostess.

L. Plausf. She is something plump indeed, a goodly, comely, graceful person.

Nov. Then there's my lady *Frances*, what d'ye call her? as ugly——

Oliv.

The Plain Dealer.

31

Oliv. As a citizen's lawfully begotten daughter.

L. Plausf. She has wit in abundance; and the handsomest heel, elbow, and tip of an ear, you ever saw.

Nov. Heel and elbow! ha! ha! and there's my lady *Betty*, you know——

Oliv. As fluttish and flatteringly as an *Irish* woman bred in *France*.

L. Plausf. Ah! all she has hangs with a loose air, indeed, and becoming negligence.

Eliz. You see all faults with lovers eyes, I find, my lord.

L. Plausf. Ah, madam, your most obliged, faithful, humble servant to command! but you can say nothing sure against the superfine mistress——

Oliv. I know who you mean. She is as censorious and detracting a jade, as a superannuated sinner.

L. Plausf. She has a smart way of railery, 'tis confess'd.

Nov. And then for Mrs. *Grideline*.

L. Plausf. She, I'm sure, is——

Oliv. One that never spoke ill of any body, 'tis confess'd: for she is as silent in conversation as a country lover, and no better company than a clock, or a weather-glass; for if she sounds, 'tis but once an hour, to put you in mind of the time of day, or to tell you 'twill be cold or hot, rain or snow.

L. Plausf. Ah, poor creature! she's extreamly good and modest.

Nov. And for Mrs. *Bridlechin*, she's——

Oliv. As proud as a churchman's wife.

L. Plausf. She's a woman of great spirit and honour, and will not make her self cheap, 'tis true.

Nov. Then Mrs. *Hoyden*, that calls all people by their surnames, and is——

Oliv. As familiar a duck——

Nov. As an actress in the tiring-room. There I was once before-hand with you, madam.

L. Plausf. Mrs. *Hoyden*! a poor, affable, good-natur'd soul. But the divine Mrs. *Trifle* comes thither too: sure her beauty, virtue, and conduct, you can say nothing to.

Oliv.

Oliv. No!

Nov. No! ——— pray let me speak, madam.

Oliv. First, can any one be call'd beautiful that squints

L. Plauf. Her eyes languish a little, I own.

Nov. Languish! ha, ha!

Oliv. Languish! then, for her conduct, she was seen at the *Country Wife* after the first day. There's for you my lord:

L. Plauf. But, madam, she was not seen to use her face all the play long, turn aside her head, or by a conscious blush discover more guilt than modesty.

Oliv. Very fine! then you think a woman modest that sees the hideous *Country Wife* without blushing, or publishing her detestation of it? d'ye hear him, cousin

Eliz. Yes; and am, I must confess, something of his opinion; and think that as an over-conscious fool at a play, by endeavouring to shew the author's want of wit exposes his own to more censure; so may a lady call her own modesty in question, by publickly cavilling with the poets, for all those grimaces of honour and artificial modesty disparage a woman's real vertue, as much as the use of white and red does the natural complexion: and you must use very, very little, if you wou'd have it thought your own.

Oliv. Then you wou'd have a woman of honour with passive looks, ears, and tongue, undergo all the hideous obscenity she hears at nasty plays.

Eliz. Truly, I think a woman betrays her want of modesty, by shewing it publickly in a play-house, as much as a man does his want of courage by a quarrel there; for the truly modest and stout say least, and are least exceptionous, especially in publick.

Oliv. O hideous! cousin: this cannot be your opinion. But you are one of those who have the confidence to pardon the filthy play.

Eliz. Why, what is there of ill in't say you?

Oliv. O fie, fie! wou'd you put me to the blush anew? call all the blood into my face again? but to satisfy you then; first, the clandestine obscenity in the very name of *Horner*.

Eliz.

Eliz. Truly, 'tis so hidden, I cannot find it out I confess.

Oliv. O horrid! does it not give you the rank conception or image of a goat, or town-bull, or a satyr? nay, what is yet a filthier image than all the rest, that of an eunuch?

Eliz. What then? I can think of a goat, or town-bull, or a satyr, without any hurt.

Oliv. I; but, one cannot stop there.

Eliz. I can, cousin.

Oliv. O no; for when you have those filthy creatures in your head once, the next thing you think, is what they do; as their defiling of honest mens beds and rapes upon sleeping and waking country virgins under hedges, and on haycocks: nay, further——

Eliz. Nay, no farther, cousin: we have enough of your comment on the play, which will make me more ashamed than the play it self.

Oliv. O! believe me, 'tis a filthy play; and you may take my word for a filthy play, as soon as another's: but the filthiest thing in that play, or any other play, is——

Eliz. Pray keep it to your self, if it be so.

Oliv. No, faith, you shall know it; I'm resolv'd to make you out of love with the play: I say, the leudest filthiest thing is his *China*; nay, I will never forgive the beastly author his *China*: he has quite taken away the reputation of poor *China* it self, and sully'd the most innocent and pretty furniture of a lady's chamber; inso-much that I was fain to break all my defil'd vessels. You see I have none left; nor you, I hope.

Eliz. You'll pardon me, I cannot think the worse of my *China* for that of the play-house.

Oliv. Why, you will not keep any now sure! 'tis now as unfit an ornament for a lady's chamber, as the pictures that come from *Italy*, and other hot countries; as appears by their nudities, which I always cover, or scratch out, wheresoe'er I find 'em. But *China*! out upon't, filthy *China*! nasty, debauch'd *China*!

Eliz. All this will not put me out of conceit with *China*, nor the play, which is acted to day, or another of the

the same beastly author's, as you call him, which I'll see.

Oliv. You will not sure! nay, you sha' not vent your reputation by going, and mine by leaving me alone with two men here: nay you'll disoblige me for ever if———

(Pulls her back)

Eliz. I stay——your servant.

(Exit Eliz.)

Oliv. Well——but, my lord, though you justify everybody, you cannot in earnest uphold so beastly a writer, whose ink is so smutty, as one may say.

L. Plaust. Faith, I dare swear the poor man did not think to disoblige the ladies, by any amorous, soft, passionate, luscious saying in his play.

Oliv. Foy, my lord; but what think you, Mr. Nov. of the play? tho I know you are a friend to all that are new.

Nov. Faith, madam, I must confess, the new play wou'd not be the worse for my advice, but I cou'd never get the silly rogues, the poets, to mind what I say; but I'll tell you what counsel I gave the surly fool you speak of.

Oliv. What was't?

Nov. Faith, to put his play into rhyme; for rhyme you know, often makes mystical nonsense pass with critics for wit, and a double meaning saying with the ladies, for soft, tender, and moving passion. But now I talk of passion, I saw your old lover this morning——

captain———

(Whispers)

Enter captain Manly, Freeman and Fidelia standing behind.

Oliv. Whom?——— nay, you need not whisper.

Man. We are luckily got hither unobserv'd:——— How! in a close conversation with these supple rascals, the out-casts of sempstresses shops!

Free. Faith, pardon her, captain, that since she cou'd no longer be entertained with your manly bluntness, and honest love, she takes up with the pert chat, and common place flattery of these fluttering parrots of the town, apes and eccho's of men only.

Man.

Man. Do not you, sir, play the eccho too, mock me, dally with my own words, and shew your self as impertinent as they are.

Free. Nay, captain——

Fid. Nay, lieutenant, do not excuse her, methinks she looks very kindly upon 'em both, and seems to be pleas'd with what that fool there says to her.

Man. You lye, sir, and hold your peace, that I may not be provok'd to give you a worse reply.

Oliv. Manly return'd, d'ye say! and is he safe?

Nov. My lord saw him too. Hark you, my lord.

(Whispers to Plausible.

Man. She yet seems concern'd for my safety, and perhaps they are admitted now here but for their news of me; for intelligence indeed is the common passport of nauseous fools, when they go their round of good tables and houses.

(Aside.

Oliv. I heard of his fighting only, without particulars, and confels I always lov'd his brutal courage, because it made me hope it might rid me of his more brutal love.

Man. What's that?

(Apart.

Oliv. But is he at last return'd, d'ye say, unhurt?

Nov. Ay, faith, without doing his business, for the rogue has been these two years pretending to a wooden leg, which he wou'd take from fortune, as kindly as the staff of a marshal of France, and rather read his name in a Gazette——

Oliv. Than in the entail of a good estate.

Man. So!——

[Aside.

Nov. I have an ambition, I must confels, of losing my heart before such a fair enemy as your self, madam, but that silly rogues shou'd be ambitious of losing their arms, and——

Oliv. Looking like a pair of compasses.

Nov. But he has no use of his arms, but to set 'em on kimbow, for he never pulls of his hat, at least not to me, I'm sure; for you must know, madam, he has a fanatical hatred to good company: he can't abide me.

L. Plaus. O, be not so severe to him, as to say he hates good company: for I assure you, he has a great respect, esteem and kindness for me.

Man. That kind, civil rogue has spoken yet ten thousand times worse of me, than t'other.

Nov. Well, if he be return'd, Mr. *Novel*, then shall I be pester'd again with his boisterous sea-love; have my alcove smell like a cabin, my chamber perfum'd with his tarpaulin brandenburgh; and hear vollies of brandy sighs, enough to make a fog in one's room. Foh, I hate a lover that smells like *Thames-street*.

Man. I can bear no longer, and need hear no more.

[*Aside.*

But since you have these two pulvillio boxes, these essence bottles, this pair of musk-cats here, I hope I may venture to come yet nearer you.

Oliv. Over-heard us then!

Nov. I hope he heard me not.

(*Aside.*

L. Plaus. Most noble and heroick captain, your most oblig'd, faithful, humble servant.

Nov. Dear tar, thy humble servant.

Man. Away———madam———

Oliv. Nay, I think I have fitted you for listening.

(*Thrusts Novel and Plausible on each side.*

Man. You have fitted me, for believing you could not be fickle, tho you were young; cou'd not dissemble love tho'twas your interest; nor be vain, tho you were handsome; nor break your promise, tho to a parting lover; nor abuse your best friend, tho you had wit: but I take not your contempt of me worse than your esteem, or civility for these things here, tho you know 'em.

Nov. Things!

L. Plaus. Let the captain rally a little.

Man. Yes, things; canst thou be angry thou thing?

(*Coming up to Novel.*

Nov. No, since my lord says you speak in raillery; for tho your sea-raillery be something rough, yet I confess, we use one another too as bad every day at *Locker's*, and never quarrel for the matter.

L. Plaus.

The Plain Dealer. 37

L. Plaus. Nay, noble captain, be not angry with him :
a word with you I beseech you——

(*Whispers to Manly.*)

Oliv. Well, we women, like the rest of the cheats of the world, when our cullies or creditors have found us out, and will, or can trust no longer, pay debts, and satisfy obligations, with a quarrel, the kindest present a man can make to his mistress, when he can make no more presents: for oftentimes in love, as at cards, we are forc'd to play foul, only to give over the game; and use our lovers like the cards, when we can get no more by 'em, throw 'em up in a pet, upon the first dispute.

(*Aside.*)

Man. My lord, all that you have made me know by your whispering, which I knew not before, is, that you have a stinking breath, there's a secret for your secret.

L. Plaus. Pshaw! pshaw!

Man. But, madam, tell me, pray, what was't about this spark could take you? was it the merit of his fashionable impudence, the briskness of his noise, the wit of his laugh, his judgment, or fancy in his garniture? or was it a well-trim'd glove, or the scent of it that charm'd you?

Nov. Very well, sir, 'gad these sea-captains make nothing of dressing: but let me tell you, sir, a man by his dress, as much as by any thing, shews his wit and judgment; nay, and his courage too.

Free. How his courage Mr. *Novel*?

Nov. Why, for example by red breeches, tuck'd up hair or peruke, a greasy broad belt, and now-a-days a short sword.

Man. Thy courage will appear more by thy belt, than thy sword, I dare swear. Then, madam, for this gentle piece of courtesy, this man of tame honour, what could you find in him? was it his languishing affected tone? his mannerly look? his second-hand flattery? the refuse of the play-house tiring rooms? or his slavish obsequiousness in watching at the door of your box at the play-house, for your hand to your chair? or his jan-

ty way of playing with your fan? or was it the gun-powder spot on his hand, or the jewel in his ear, that purchas'd your heart?

Oliv. Good jealous captain, no more of your——

L. Plaus. No, let him go on, madam, for perhaps he may make you laugh: and I wou'd contribute to your pleasure any way.

Man. Gentle rogue!

Oliv. No, noble captain, you cannot sure think any thing cou'd take me more than that heroick title of yours, captain; for you know we women love honour inordinately:

Nov. Ha, ha, faith she is with thee, bully, for thy raillery.

Man. Faith so shall I be with you, no bully, for your grinning. (*Aside to Novel.*)

Oliv. Then that noble lion-like mien of yours, that soldier-like weather-beaten complexion, and that manly roughness of your voice; how can they otherwise than charm us women, who hate effeminacy!

Nov. Ha, ha, faith I can't hold from laughing.

Man. Nor shall I from kicking anon. (*Aside to Nov.*)

Oliv. And then, that captain-like carelessness in your dress, but especially your scarf; 'twas just such another, only a little higher ty'd, made me in love with my taylor as he past by my window the last trayning-day; for we women adore a martial man, and you have nothing wanting to make you more one, or more agreeable, but a wooden leg.

L. Plaus. Nay, i'faith, there your ladyship was a wag, and it was fine, just, and well rally'd.

Nov. Ay, ay, madam, with you ladies too, martial men must needs be very killing.

Man. Peace, you, *Bartholomew fair buffoons*; and be not you vain that these laugh on your side, for they will laugh at their own dull jests; but no more of 'em, for I will only suffer now this lady to be witty and merry.

Oliv. You wou'd not have your panegyrick interrupted. I go on then to your humour. Is there any

any thing more agreeable than the pretty fullness of that ? than the greatness of your courage, which most of all appears in your spirit of contradiction ? for you dare give all mankind the lye ; and your opinion is your only mistress, for you renounce that too, when it becomes another man's.

Nov. Ha, ha ! I cannot hold, I must laugh at thee, tar, faith !

L. Plauf. And i'faith, dear captain, I beg your pardon, and leave to laugh at you too, tho' I protest I mean you no hurt ; but, when a lady rallies, a standard-by must be complaisant, and do her reason in laughing : ha, ha.

Man. Why, you impudent, pitiful wretches, you presume sure upon your effeminacy to urge me ; for you are in all things so like women, that you may think it in me a kind of cowardice to beat you.

Oliv. No hectoring, good captain.

Man. Or, perhaps, you think this lady's presence secures you ; but have a care, she has talk'd her self out of all the respect I had for her ; and by using me ill before you, has given me a privilege of using you so before her ; but if you wou'd preserve your respect to her, and not be beaten before her, go, be gone immediately.

Nov. Begone ! what ?

L. Plauf. Nay, worthy, noble, generous captain.

Man. Begone, I say.

Nov. Be gone again ! to us be gone !

Man. No chattering babboons, instantly be gone.

Or——

(*Manly puts 'em out of the room : Novel struts, Plausible cringes.*)

Nov. Well, madam, we'll go make the cards ready in your bed-chamber : sure you will not stay long with him.

(*Exit Plauf. Nov.*)

Oliv. Turn hither your rage, good captain swagger-huff, and be saucy with your mistress, like a true captain ; but be civil to your rivals and betters, and do not threaten any thing but me here ; no, not so much as my

wind

windows; nor do not think your self in the lodgings of one of your suburb-mistresses beyond the tower.

Man. Do not give me cause to think so, for those less infamous women part with their lovers, just as you did from me, with unforc'd vows of constancy, and floods of willing tears; but the same winds bear away their lovers and their vows: and for their grief, if the credulous unexpected fools return, they find new comforters, fresh cullies, such as I found here. The mercenary love of those women too suffers shipwrack with their gallant's fortunes; now you have heard *Chance* has us'd me scurvily, therefore you do too. Well, persevere in your ingratitude, falshood and disdain; have constancy in something, and I promise you to be as just to your real scorn, as I was to your feign'd love: and henceforward will despise, contemn, hate, loath, and detest you, most faithfully.

Enter Lettice.

Oliv. Get the hombre-cards ready in the next room, *Lettice* and——

Whispers to Lettice.

Free. Bravely resolv'd, captain,

Fid. And you'll be sure to keep your word, I hope, sir.

Man. I hope so too.

Fid. Do you but hope it, sir? if you are not as good as your word, 'twill be the first time you ever bragg'd, sure.

Man. She has restor'd my reason with my heart.

Free. But now you talk of restoring, captain, there are other things which, next to one's heart, one wou'd not part with; I mean your jewels and money, which it seems she has, sir?

Man. What's that to you, sir?

Free. Pardon me, whatsoever is yours I have a share in't, I'm sure, which I will not lose for asking, tho' you may be too generous, or too angry now to do't your self.

Fid. Nay, then I'll make bold to make my claim too.

(Both going towards Olivia.)

Man.

The Plain Dealer.

41

Man. Hold, you impertinent, officious fops——
how have I been deceiv'd! (*Aside.*)

Free. Madam, there are certain appurtenances to a lover's heart, call'd jewels, which always go along with it.

Fid. And which, with lovers, have no value in themselves, but from the heart they come with; our captain's, madam, it seems you scorn to keep, and much more will those worthless things without it, I am confident.

Oliv. A gentleman so well made as you are, may be confident——us easy women cou'd not deny you any thing you ask, if 'twere for your self; but, since 'tis for another, I beg your leave to give him my answer. (An agreeable young fellow this——and wou'd not be my averfion) [*Aside.*] Captain, your young friend here has a very persuading face, I confess; yet you might have ask'd me your self for those trifles you left with me, which (hark you a little, for I dare trust you with the secret; you are a man of so much honour I'm sure (I say then, not expecting your return, or hoping ever to see you again, I have deliver'd your jewels to——
(*Aside to Manly.*)

Man. Whom?

Oliv. My husband.

Man. Your husband!

Oliv. Ay, my husband; for since you cou'd leave me, I am lately and privately married to one, who is a man of so much honour and experience in the world, that I dare not ask him for your jewels again to restore 'em to you; lest he should conclude you never wou'd have parted with 'em to me, on any other score, but the exchange of my honour: which rather than you'd let me lose, you'd lose I'm sure your self, those trifles of yours.

Man. Triumphant impudence! but married too!

Oliv. O, speak not so loud, my servants know it not: I am married; there's no resisting one's destiny, or love, you know.

Man. Why, did you love him too?

Oliv.

Oliv. Most passionately ; nay, love him now, tho' I have married him, and he me : which mutual love, I hope you are too good, too generous a man to disturb, by any future claim, or visits to me. 'Tis true, he is now absent in the country, but returns shortly ; therefore I beg of you, for your own ease and quiet, and my honour, you will never see me more.

Man. I wish I had never seen you.

Oliv. But if you should ever have any thing to say to me hereafter, let that young gentleman there be your messenger.

Man. You wou'd be kinder to him : I find he shou'd be welcome.

Oliv. Alas, his youth wou'd keep my husband from suspicions, and his visits from scandal ; for we women may have pity for such as he, but no love : and I already think you do not well to spirit him away to the sea ; and the sea is already but too rich with the spoils of the shore.

Man. True perfect woman !—— If I could say any thing more injurious to her now, I wou'd ; for I cou'd out-rail a bilk'd whore, or a kick'd coward ; but, now I think on't, that were rather to discover my love than hatred ; and I must not talk, for something I must do.

(*Aside.*

Oliv. I think I have given him enough of me now, never to be troubled with him again——

(*Aside.*

Enter Lettice.

Well, *Lettice*, are the cards and all ready within ? I come then. Captain, I beg your pardon : you will not make one at ombre ?

Man. No, madam, but I'll wish you a little good luck before you go.

Oliv. No, if you wou'd have me thrive, curse me ; for that you'll do heartily, I suppose.

Man. Then if you will have it so, may all the curses light upon you, women ought to fear, and you deserve ; first, may the curse of loving play attend your sordid covetousness, and fortune cheat you, by trusting to her, as you have cheated me ; the curse of pride, or a good reputation, fall on your lust ; the curse of affectation on your

your beauty; the curse of your husband's company on your pleasures; and the curse of your gallant's disappointments in his absence; and the curse of scorn, jealousy or despair on your love; and then the curse of loving on.

Oliv. And to requite all your curses, I will only return you your last; may the curse of loving me still fall upon your proud hard heart, that cou'd be so cruel to me in these horrid curses: but heav'n forgive you. (*Ex. Oliv.*)

Man. Hell and the devil reward thee.

Free. Well, you see now, mistresses, like friends, are lost by letting 'em handle your money; and most women are such kind of witches, who can have no power over a man, unless you give 'em money; but when once they have got any from you, they never leave you till they have all. Therefore I never dare give a woman a farthing.

Man. Well, there is yet this comfort by losing one's money with one's mistress, a man is out of danger of getting another; of being made prize again by love, who, like a pirate, takes you by spreading false colours: but when once you have run your ship aground, the treacherous picaroon loafs; so by your ruin you save your self from slavery at last.

Enter Boy.

Boy. Mrs. Lettice, here's madam Blackacre come to wait upon her honour.

Man. D'ye here that? let us be gone before she comes: for hence forward I'll avoid the whole damned sex for ever, and woman as a sinking ship.

(*Exit Man. and Fid.*)

Free. And I'll stay, to revenge on her your quarrel to the sex: for out of love to her jointure, and hatred to business, I wou'd marry her, to make an end of her thousand suits, and my thousand engagements, to the comfort of two unfortunate sorts of people, my plaintiffs and her defendants, my creditors and her adversaries.

Enter

Enter widow Blackacre, led in by major Oldfox, and Jerry Blackacre following laden with green bags.

Wid. 'Tis an errant sea-ruffian; but I am glad I met him at last, to serve him again, major, for the last service was not good in law. Boy, duck, Jerry, where is my paper of *Memorandums*? give me, child: Where is my cousin *Olivia* now, my kind relation?

Free. Here is one that wou'd be your kind relation madam.

Wid. What mean you, sir?

Free. Why, faith, (to be short) to marry you, widow.

Wid. Is not this the wild rude person we saw at captain Manly's?

Jerr. Ay, forsooth, an't please.

Wid. What wou'd you? what are you? marry me!

Free. Ay, faith; for I am a younger brother, and you are a widow.

Wid. You are an impertinent person; and go about your business.

Free. I have none, but to marry thee, widow.

Wid. But I have other business, I'd have you to know.

Free. But you have no business a nights, widow; and I'll make you pleasanter business than any you have: for a nights, I assure you, I am a man of great business; for the business——

Wid. Go, I'm sure you're an idle fellow.

Free. Try me but, widow, and employ me as you find my abilities and industry.

Old. Pray be civil to the lady, Mr.———she is a person of quality, a person that is no person——

Free. Yes, but she's a person that is a widow: be you mannerly to her, because you are to pretend only to be her squire, to arm her to her lawyers chambers: but I will be impudent and bawdy; for she must love and marry me.

Wid. Marry come up, you saucy familiar Jack! you think, with us widows, 'tis no more than up and ride. Gad forgive me, now-a-days, every idle, young, hectoring, roaring companion, with a pair of turn'd red breeches, and a broad back, thinks to carry away any

wi-

widow of the best degree: but I'd have you to know, fir, all widows are not got, like places at court, by impudence and importunity only.

Old. No, no, soft, soft, you are a young man and not fit——

Free. For a widow? yes sure, old man, the fitter.

Old. Go to, go to; if others had not laid in their claims before you——

Free. Not you, I hope.

Old. Why not I, fir? sure I am a much more proportionable match for her than you, fir; I, who am an elder brother, of a comfortable fortune, and of equal years with her.

Wid. How's that, you unmannerly person: I'd have you to know, I was born in *Ann' undec' Caroli prim'*.

Old. Your pardon, lady, your pardon: be not offended with your very servant——but, I say, fir, you are a beggarly younger brother, twenty years younger than her, without any land or stock, but your great stock of impudence: therefore what pretension can you have to her?

Free. You have made it for me: first, because I am a younger brother.

Wid. Why, is that a sufficient plea to a relict? how appears it, fir? by what foolish custom?

Free. By custom time out of mind only. Then, fir, because I have nothing to keep me after her death, I am the likelier to take care of her life. And for my being twenty years younger than her, and having a sufficient stock of impudence, I leave it to her whether they will be valid exceptions to me in her widow's law or equity.

Old. Well, she has been so long in *Chancery*, that I'll stand to her equity and decree between us. Come, lady, pray snap up this young snap at first, or we shall be troubled with him: give him a city-widow's answer, that is, with all the ill breeding imaginable. (*Aside to the widow.*) Come, madam.

Wid. Well then to make an end of this foolish wooing, for nothing interrupts business more: first, for you, major——

Old.

Old. You declare in my favour then?

Free. What, direct the court? come, young lawyer, thou shalt be a counsel for me.

Ferr. Gad, I shall betray your cause then, as well as an older lawyer; never stir.

Wid. First, I say, for you, major, my walking hospital of an antient foundation; thou bag of mummy, thou wou'dst fall asunder, if 'twere not for cerecloths——

Old. How, lady!

Free. Ha, ha——

Ferr. Hey, brave mother! use all suitors thus, for my sake.

Wid. Thou wither'd, hobbling, distorted cripple; nay, thou art a cripple all over, wou'dst thou make me the staff of thy age, the crutch of thy decrepitedness? me——

Free. Well said, widow! faith, thou wou'dst make a man love thee now, without dissembling.

Wid. Thou senseless, impertinent, quibbling, drivelling, feeble, paralytick, impotent, fumbling, frigid miscompoop.

Ferr. Hey, bravemother, for calling of names, i'fact!

Wid. Wou'dst thou make a caudle-maker, a nurse of me? can't you be bed-rid without a bed-fellow? won't your swan-skin, furs, flannel, and the scorch'd trencher keep you warm there? wou'd you have me your *Scotch* warming-pan, with a pox to you? me——

Old. O heavens!

Free. I told you I shou'd be thought the fitter man, major.

Ferr. Ay, you old fobus, and you wou'd have been my guardian, wou'd you, to have taken care of my estate, that half of't shou'd never come to me, by letting long leases at pepper-corn rents?

Wid. If I wou'd have married an old man, 'tis well known I might have married an earl, nay, what's more, a judge, and been cover'd the winter-nights with the lamb-skins, which I prefer to the ermins of nobles. And dost thou think I wou'd wrong my poor minor there for you?

Free. Your minor is a chopping minor, god bless him.

(*Strokes Jerry on the head.*)

Old

Old. Your minor may be a major of horse or foot, for his bigness; and it seems, you will have the cheating of your minor to your self.

Wid. Pray, sir, bear witness: cheat my minor! I'll bring my action of the case for the slander.

Free. Nay, I wou'd bear false witness for thee now, widow, since you have done me justice, and have thought me the fitter man for you.

Wid. Fair and softly, sir, 'tis my minor's case, more than my own; and I must do him justice now on you.

Free. How!

Old. So then.

Wid. You are, first, (I warrant) some renegado from the inns of court and the law; and thoult come to suffer for't by the law, that is, be hang'd.

Jer. Not about, your neck, forsooth, I hope.

Free. But, madam ———

Old. Hear the court.

Wid. Thou art some debauch'd, drunken, leud, hectoring, gaming companion, and want'st some widow's old gold to nick upon; but, I thank you, sir, that's for my lawyers.

Free. Faith, we shou'd ne'er quarrel about that, for guineas wou'd serve my turn. But, widow ———

Wid. Thou art a foul-mouth boaster of thy lust, a meer bragadochio of thy strength for wine and women, and wilt belye thy self more than thou dost women, and art every way a base deceiver of women; and wou'd deceive me too, wou'd you?

Free. Nay, faith, widow, this is judging without seeing the evidence.

Wid. I say, you are a worn-out whore-master at five and twenty, both in body and fortune; and cannot be trusted by the common wenches of the town, lest you shou'd not pay 'em; nor by the wives of the town lest you shou'd pay 'em: so you want women, and wou'd have me your baud to procure 'em for you.

Free. Faith, if you had any good acquaintance, widow, 'twou'd be civilly done of thee; for I am just come from sea.

Wid.

Wid. I mean, you wou'd have me keep you, that you might turn keeper; for poor widows are only us'd like bawds by you: you go to church with us, but to get other women to lie with. In fine, you are a cheating cunning spendthrift; and having sold your own annuity, wou'd waste my jointure.

Jerr. And make havock of our estate personal, and all our gilt plate: I shou'd soon be picking up all our more-gag'd apostle-spoons, bowls, and beakers, out of most of the ale houses betwixt *Hercules Pillars* and the *Boatswain* in *Wapping*; nay, and you'd be scouring amongst my trees, and make 'em knock down one another, like routed reeling watchmen at midnight: wou'd you so, bully?

Free. Nay, prithee widow, hear me.

Wid. No, sir; I'd have you to know, thou pitiful, paltry, lath-back'd fellow, if I wou'd have married a young man, 'tis well known, I cou'd have had any young heir in *Norfolk*, nay, the hopefull'st young man this day at the *Kings-Bench Bar*: I, that am a relict and executrix of known plentiful assets and parts, who understand my self and the law. And wou'd you have me under covert-baron again? no, sir, no covert-baron for me.

Free. But, dear widow, hear me. I value you only, not your jointure.

Wid. Nay, sir, hold there; I know your love to a widow is covetousness of her jointure: and a widow, a little stricken in years, with a good jointure, is like an old mansion-house in a good purchase, never valu'd; but take one, take t'other: and perhaps, when you are in possession, you'd neglect it, let it drop to the ground, for want of necessary repairs or expence upon't.

Free. No, widow, one wou'd be sure to keep all tight, when one is to forfeit one's lease by dilapidation.

Wid. Fie, fie, I neglect my business with this foolish discourse of love. *Jerry*, child, let me see the list of the jury: I'm sure my cousin *Olivia* has some relations amongst 'em. But where is she?

Free. Nay, widow, but hear me one word only.

Wid. Nay, sir, no more, pray. I will no more hearken

en again to your foolish love-motions, than to offers of arbitration.

[*Exit Wid. and Jer.*]

Free. Well, I'll follow thee yet; for he that has a pretension at court, or to a widow, must never give over for a little ill usage.

Old. Therefore I'll get her by assiduity, patience and long sufferings, which you will not undergo; for you idle young fellows leave off love when it comes to be business; and industry gets more women than love.

Free. Ay, industry, the fool's and old man's merit; but I'll be industrious too, and make a business on't, and get her by law, wrangling, and contests and not by sufferings: and, because you are no dangerous rival, I'll give thee counsel, major.

*If you litigious widow e'er wou'd gain,
Sigh not to her, but by the law complain:
To her, as to a baud, defendant sue
With statutes, and make justice pimp for you.*

[*Exeunt.*]

ACT III. SCENE I.

Westminster-Hall.

Enter Manly and Freeman, two Sailors behind.

Manly.

I Hate this place worse than a man that has inherited a Chancery suit: I wish I were well out on't again.

Free. Why you need not be afraid of this place: for a man without money needs no more fear a croud of lawyers, than a croud of pick-pockets.

Man. This, the reverend of the law wou'd have thought the palace or residence of justice; but, if it be, the lives here with the state of a *Turkish* emperor, rarely
seen

seen ; and besieg'd rather than defend, by her numerous black guard here.

Free. Methinks, 'tis like one of their own halls, at *Christmas* time, whither, from all parts, fools bring their money, to try, by the dice, (not the worst judges) whether it shall be their own, or no : but after a tedious fretting and wrangling, they drop away all their money, on both sides ; and finding neither the better, at last go empty and lovingly away together to the tavern, joining their curses against the young lawyer's box, that sweeps all, like the old ones.

Man. Spoken like a revelling *Christmas* lawyer.

Free. Yes, I was one, I confess, but was fain to leave the law, out of conscience, and fall to making false mulcters : rather chuse to cheat the king, than his subjects ; plunder, rather than take fees

Man. Well, a plague and a purse famine light on the law ; and that female limb of it, who drag'd me hither to day : but prithee go see if, in that croud of dagged tale gowns there, thou canst find her.

[*Pointing to a crowd of lawyers at the end of the stage.*
(*Exit Freeman.*

Manet Manly.

How hard it is to be an hypocrite !
At least to me, who am but newly so.
I thought it once a kind of knavery,
Nay, cowardice, to hide one's fault ; but now
The common frailty, love, becomes my shame.
He must not know I love the ungrateful still,
Lest he contemn me, more than she : for I,
It seems, can undergo a woman's scorn,
But not a man's——

Enter to him Fidelia.

Fid. Sir, good sir, generous captain.

Man. Prithee, kind impertinence, leave me. Why shou'dst thou follow me, flatter my generosity now, since thou knowest I have no money left ? if I had it, I'd give it thee, to buy my quiet.

Fid. I never follow'd yet, sir, reward or fame, but you alone ; nor do I now beg any thing, but leave to share

share your miseries : you shou'd not be a niggard of 'em, since, methinks, you have enough to spare. Let me follow you now, because you hate me, as you have often said.

Man. I ever hated a coward's company, I must confess.

Fid. Let me follow you, till I am none then ; for you, I'm sure, will through such worlds of dangers, that I shall be enur'd to 'em ; nay, I shall be afraid of your anger more than danger, and so turn valiant out of fear. Dear captain, do not cast me off till you have try'd me once more : do not, do not go to sea again without me.

Man. Thou to sea ! to court, thou fool ; remember the advice I gave thee : thou art a handsom spaniel, and canst fawn naturally : go, busk about and run thy self into the next great man's lobby : first fawn upon the slaves without, and then run into the lady's bed-chamber ; thou may'st be admitted at last, to tumble her bed : go seek, I say, and lose me ; for I am not able to keep thee : I have not bread for my self.

Fid. Therefore I will not go, because then I may help and serve you.

Man. Thou !

Fid. I warrant you, sir, for at worst, I cou'd beg or steal for you.

Man. Nay, more bragging ! dost thou not know there's venturing your life in stealing ? go, prithee, away : thou art as hard to shake off, as that flattering effeminating mischief, love.

Fid. Love did you name ? why, you are not so miserable as to be yet in love, sure ?

Man. No, no, prithee away, be gone, or—— I had almost discovered my love and shame ; well, if I had that thing cou'd not think the worse of me : —— or if he did —— no —— yes, he shall know it —— he shall —— but then I must never leave him, for they are such secrets, that make parasites and pimps lords of their masters ; for any slavery or tyranny is easier than loves. (*Aside.* Come hither, since thou art so forward to serve me : hast thou but resolution enough to endure the torture of a secret ? for such to some is insupportable.

E

Fid.

Fid. I wou'd keep it as safe, as if your dear precious life depended on't.

Man. Damn your deareness. It concerns more than my life, my honour.

Fid. Doubt it not, sir.

Man. And do not discover it; by too much fear of discovering it; but have a great care you let not *Freeman* find it out.

Fid. I warrant you, sir, I am already all joy with the hopes of your commands; and shall be all wings in the execution of 'em: speak quickly, sir.

Man. You said you'd beg for me.

Fid. I did, sir.

Man. Then you shall beg for me.

Fid. With all my heart, sir.

Man. That is, pimp for me.

Fid. How, sir?

Man. D'ye start! think'st thou, thou cou'dst do me any other service? come, no dissembling honour: I know you can do it handsomly, thou wert made for't: you have lost your time with me at sea, you must recover it,

Fid. Do not, sir, beget your self more reasons for your aversion to me, and make my obedience to you a fault; I am the unfittest in the world to do you such a service.

Man. Your cunning arguing against it, shews but how fit you are for it. No more dissembling: here, (I say) you must go use it for me to *Olivia*.

Fid. To her, sir?

Man. Go flatter, lye, kneel, promise, any thing to get her for me: I cannot live unless I have her. Didst thou not say thou wou'dst do any thing to save my life? and she said you had a persuading face.

Fid. But did not you say, sir, your honour was dearer to you than your life? and wou'd you have me contribute to the loss of that, and carry love from you, to the most infamous, most false, and——

Man. And most beautiful!

[*Sighs aside.*

Fid. Most ungrateful woman that ever liv'd; for sure she must be so, that cou'd desert you so soon, use you so basely, and

The Plain Dealer.

53

and so lately too ; do not, do not forget it, sir, and think—

Man. No, I will not forget it, but think of revenge : I will lie with her out of revenge. Go, be gone, and prevail for me, or never see me more.

Fid. You scorn'd her last night.

Man. I know not what I did last night ; I dissembled last night.

Fid. Heavens !

Man. Be gone, I say, and bring me love or compliance back, or hopes at least, or I'll never see thy face again, by—

Fid. O, do not swear, sir, first hear me.

Man. I'm impatient, away, you'll find me here till twelve.

[*Turns away.*

Fid. Sir—

Man. Not one word, no insinuation argument more, or soothing persuasion ; you'll have need of all your rhetoric with her : go, strive to alter her, not me ; be gone.

[*Exit Manly, at the end of the stage.*

Manet Fidelia.

Fid. Shou'd I discover to him now my sex,
And lay before him his strange cruelty,
'Twould but incense it more. — No, 'tis not time,
For his love, must I then betray my own ?
Were ever love or chance, till now, severe ?
Or shifting woman pos'd with such a task ?
Forc'd to beg that which kills her, if obtain'd ;
And give away her lover not to lose him. (*Exit Fid.*

Enter Widow Blackacre in the middle of half a dozen lawyers, whisper'd to by a fellow in black, Jerry Blackacre following the croud.

Wid. Offer me a reference, you saucy companion you ! d'ye know who you speak to ? art thou a solicitor in Chancery, and offer a reference ? a pretty fellow ! Mr. serjeant Ploddon, here's a fellow has the impudence to offer me a reference.

Serj. Plod. Who's that has the impudence to offer a reference within these walls ?

Wid. Nay, for a splitter of causes to do't !

Serj. Plod. No, madam ; to a lady learned in the law, as you are, the offer of a reference were to impose upon you.

Wid. No, no, never fear me for a reference, Mr. serjeant. But come, have you not forgot your brief? are you sure you shan't make the mistake of—— hark you—— (*Whispers*) Go then, go to your court of *Common Pleas*, and say one thing over and over again: you do it so naturally, you'll never be suspected for protracting time.

Serj. Plod. Come, I know the course of the court, and your business. (*Exit Serj. Plod.*)

Wid. Let's see, *Jerry*, where are my minutes? come, Mr. *Quaint*, pray go talk a great deal for me in *Chancery*, let your words be easy, and your sense hard; my cause requires it: branch it bravely, and deck my cause with flowers, that the snake may lie hidden. Go, go, and be sure you remember the decree of my lord chancellor *Tricesimo quarto* of the queen.

Quaint. I will, as I see cause, extenuate, or exemplify matter of fact; baffle truth with impudence: answer exceptions with questions, tho never so impertinent; for reasons give 'em words; for law and equity, tropes and figures: and so relax and enervate the sinews of their argument, with the oil of my eloquence. But when my lungs can reason no longer, and not being able to say any thing more for our cause, say every thing of our adversary; whose reputation, tho never so clear and evident in the eye of the world, yet with sharp invectives——

Wid. Alias *Billingsgate*.

Quaint. With poyant and sower invectives, I say, I will deface, wipe out, and obliterate his fair reputation, even as a record with the juice of lemons; and tell such a story, (for the truth on 'tis, all that we can do for our client, in *Chancery*, is telling a story) a fine story) a long story, such a story——

Wid. Go, save thy breath for the cause; talk at the bar, Mr. *Quaint*: you are so copiously fluent, you can weary any one's ears sooner than your own tongue. Go, weary our adversaries counsel, and the court: go, thou art a fine-spoken person: adad, I shall make thy wife jealous of me: if you can but court the court into a decree

cree for us. Go, get you gone, and remember——
(*Whispers*) (Exit Quaint.)

Come, Mr. *Blunder*, pray baul soundly for me, at the *King's-bench*, bluster, sputter, question, cavil; but be sure your argument be intricate enough to confound the court: and then you do my business. Talk what you will, but be sure your tongue never stand still; for your own noise will secure your sense from censure: 'tis like coughing or hemming when one has got the belly-ake, which stifles the unmannerly noise. Go, dear rogue, and succeed; and I'll invite, thee e'er it be long, to more souz'd venison:

Blund. I'll warrant you, after your verdict, your judgment shall not be arrested upon if's and and's.

Wid. Come, Mr. *Petulant*, let me give you some new instructions for our cause in the *Exchequer*: are the barons sate?

Pet. Yes, no; may be they are, may be they are not: what know I? what care I?

Wid. Hey day! I wish you wou'd but snap up the counsel on t'other side anon, at the bar, as much; and have a little more patience with me, that I might instruct you a little better.

Pet. You instruct me! what is my brief for mistress?

Wid. Ay, but you seldom read your brief, but at the bar, if you do it then.

Pet. Perhaps I do, perhaps I don't, and perhaps 'tis time enough: pray hold your self contented, mistress.

Wid. Nay, if you go there too, I will not be contented, sir, tho you, I see, will lose my cause for want of speaking, I wo' not: you shall hear me, and shall be instructed. Let's see your brief.

Pet. Send your solicitor to me, instructed by a woman! I'd have you to know, I do not wear a bar-gown--

Wid. By a woman! and I'd have you to know, I am no common woman; but a woman conversant in the laws of the land, as well as your self, tho I have no bar-gown.

Pet. Go to, go to, mistress, you are impertinent, and there's your brief for you: instruct me!

(*Flings her breviate at her.*)

Wid.

Wid. Impertinent to me, you saucy *Jack* you! you return my breviate, but where's my fee? you'll be sure to keep that, and scan that so well, that if there chance to be but a brass half-crown in't, one's sure to hear on't again: wou'd you wou'd but look on your breviate half so narrowly. But pray give me my fee too, as well as my brief.

Pet. Mistress, that's without precedent. When did a counsel ever return his fee, pray? and you are impertinent, and ignorant to demand it.

Wid. Impertinent again, and ignorant, to me! gads-bodikins, you puny upstart in the law, to use me so, you green bag-carrier, you murderer of unfortunate causes, the clerk's ink is scarce off of your fingers, you that newly come from lamblackening the judges shoes, and are not fit to wipe mine; you call me impertinent and ignorant! I wou'd give thee a cuff on the ear, sitting the courts, if I were ignorant. Marry gep, if it had not been for me, thou had'st been yet but a hearing counsel at the bar.

Enter Mr. Buttongown, crossing the stage in haste.
Mr. Buttongown, *Mr. Buttongown,* whither so fast? what won't you stay till we are heard?

Butt. I cannot, *Mrs. Blackacre*, I must be at the council, my lord's cause stays there for me.

Wid. And mine suffers here.

Butt. I cannot help it.

Wid. I'm undone.

Butt. What's that to me?

Wid. Consider the five pound fee, if not my cause: that was something to you.

Butt. Away, away; pray be not so troublesome, mistress: I must be gone.

Wid. Nay, but consider a little: I am your old client, my lord but a new one; or let him be what he will, he will hardly be a better client to you than my self: I hope you believe I shall be in law as long as I live; therefore am no despicable client. Well, but go to your lord; I know you expect he shou'd make you a judge one day: but I hope his promise to you will prove a true lord's promise. But, that he might be sure to fail you, I wish you had his bond for't.

Butt.

Butt. But what, will you yet be thus impertinent, mistress.

Wid. Nay, I beseech you, sir, stay; if it be but to tell me my lord's case: come, in short——

Butt. Nay, then—— (Exit Buttongown.

Wid. Well, Jerry, observe child, and lay it up for hereafter: these are those lawyers, who, by being in all causes, are in none. Therefore if you would have 'em for you, let your adversary see 'em; for he may chance to depend upon them, and so, in being against thee, they'll be for thee.

Jerr. Ay, mother; they put me in mind of the unconscionable wooers of widows, who undertake briskly their matrimonial business for their money; but when they have got it once, let who's will drudge for them. Therefore have a care of 'em, forsooth. There's advice for your advice.

Wid. Well said, boy. Come, Mr. Splitcause, pray go see when my cause in *Chancery* comes on; and go speak with Mr. Quillit in the *King's-bench*, and Mr. Quirk in the *Common Pleas*, and see how our matters go there.

Enter major Oldfox.

Old. Lady, a good and propitious morning to you; and may all your causes go as well as if I my self were judge of 'em.

Wid. Sir, excuse me; I am busy, and cannot answer compliments in *Westminster-hall*. Go, Mr. Splitcause, and come to me again to that bookseller's; there I'll stay for you, that you may be sure to find me.

Old. No, sir, come to the other bookseller's: I'll attend your ladyship thither. (Exit Splitcause.

Wid. Why to the other?

Old. Because he is my bookseller, lady.

Wid. What, to sell you lozenges for your catarrh? or medicines for your corns? what else can a major deal with a bookseller for?

Old. Lady, he prints for me.

Wid. Why, are you an author?

Old. Of some few essays; deign you, lady, to peruse 'em

'em. she is a woman of parts, and I must win her by shewing mine.

(*Aside.*)

The bookseller's boy.

Boy. Will you see *Culpepper*, mistress? *Aristotle's Problems*? *The Compleat Midwife*?

Wid. No; let's see *Dalton*, *Hughs*, *Shepherd*, *Wingate*.

Boy. We have no law-books.

Wid. No! you are a pretty bookseller then.

Old. Come, have you e'er a one of my essays left?

Boy. Yes, sir, we have enough, and shall always have 'em.

Old. How so?

Boy. Why, they are good, steady, lasting ware.

Old. Nay, I hope they will live; let's see. Be pleas'd, madam, to peruse the poor endeavours of my pen: for I have a pen, tho I say it, that—— (*Gives her a book.*)

Ferr. Pray let me see *St. George for Christendom*, or, *The seven Champions of England*.

Wid. No, no; give him the *Young Clerk's Guide*. What, we shall have you read your self into a humour of rambling and fighting, and studying military discipline and wearing red breeches.

Old. Nay, if you talk of military discipline, shew him my treatise of the *Art Military*.

Wid. Hold; I wou'd as willingly he should read a play.

Ferr. O, pray, forsooth mother, let me have a play:

Wid. No, sirrah; there are young students of the law enough spoil'd already by plays: they wou'd make you in love with your landress, or, what's worse, some queen of the stage, that was a landress; and so turn keeper before you are of age.

(*Several crossing the stage.*)

But stay, *Ferry*, is not that Mr. *What-d'ye-call-him*, that goes there; he that offer'd to sell me a suit in *Chancery* for five hundred pound, for a hundred down, and only paying the clerks fees?

Ferr. Ay, forsooth, 'tis he.

Wid. Then stay here, and have a care of the bags, whilst I follow him: have a care of the bags, I say.

Ferr. And do you have a care, forsooth, of the statute against *Champertee*, I say.

(*Exit Widow.*)

Enter

Enter Freeman to them.

Free. So, there's a limb of my widow, which was wont to be inseparable from her: she can't be far.

(Aside.

How now, my pretty son-in-law that shall be, where's my widow?

Jerr. My mother but not your widow, will be forthcoming presently.

Free. Your servant, major: what, are you buying furniture for a little sleeping closet, which you miscall a study? for you do only by your books, as by your wench, bind 'em up neatly, and make 'em fine, for other people to use 'em. And your bookseller is properly your upholster; for he furnishes your room, rather than your head.

Old. Well, well, good sea-lieutenant, study you your compass; that's more than your head can deal with. (I will go find out the widow, to keep her out of his sight, or he'll board her, whilst I am treating a peace.) *(Aside.*

(Ex. Oldcox.

Manet Freeman, Jerry.

Jerr. Nay, prithee, friend, now let me have but the *Seven Champions*: you shall trust me no longer than till my mother's Mr. *Splitcause* comes; for I hope he'll lend me wherewithal to pay for't.

Free. Lend thee! here, I'll pay him. Do you want money, squire? I'm sorry a man of your estate shou'd want money.

Jerr. Nay, my mother will ne'er let me be at age: and till then, she says——

Free. At age! why you are at age already to have spent an estate, man: there are younger than you have kept their women these three years, have had half a dozen claps, and lost as many thousand pounds at play.

Jerr. Ay, they are happy sparks! nay, I know some of my school-fellows, who, when we were at school, were two years younger than me; but now I know not how, are grown men before me, and go where they will, and look to themselves: but my curmudgeonly mother won't allow me wherewithal to be a man of my self with.

Free

Free. Why, there 'tis; I knew your mother was in fault. Ask but your school-fellows what they did to be men of themselves.

Ferr. Why, I know they went to law with their mothers: for they say, there's no good to be done upon a widow-mother, till one goes to law with her; but mine is as plaguy a lawyer as any's of our inn. Then would she marry too, and cut down my trees. Now, I should hate, man, to have my father's wife kiss'd, and slap, and t'other thing too, (you know what I mean) by another man: and our trees are the purest, tall, even, shady twigs, by my fa——

Free. Come, squire, let your mother and your trees fall as she pleases, rather than wear this gown, and carry green bags all thy life, and be pointed at for a tony: but you shall be able to deal with her yet the common way. Thou shalt make false love to some lawyer's daughter, whose father, upon the hopes of thy marrying her, shall lend thee money and law, to preserve thy estate and trees: and thy mother is so ugly, no body will have her, if she cannot cut down thy trees.

Ferr. Nay, if I had but any body to stand by me, I am as stomachful as another.

Free. That will I: I'll not see any hopeful young gentleman abus'd.

Boy. By any but your self.

(*Aside.*

Ferr. The truth on't is, mine's as arrant a widow-mother to her poor child, as any's in *England*. She won't so much as let one have sixpence in one's pocket to see a motion, or the dancing of the ropes, or——

Free. Come, you shan't want money: there's gold for you.

Ferr. O lord, sir, two guineas! d'ye lend me this? is there no trick in't? well, sir, I'll give you my bond for security.

Free. No, no; thou hast given me thy face for security: any body would swear thou dost not look like a cheat. You shall have what you will of me; and if your mother will not be kinder to you, come to me, who will.

Ferr.

Jerr. By my fa——he's a curious fine gentleman! —

(*Aside.*

But will you stand by one?

Free. If you can be resolute.

Jerr. Can be resolv'd! gad, if she gives me but a cross word, I'll leave her to night, and come to you. But now I have got money, I'll go to *Jack-of-all Trades*, at't'other end of the hall, and buy the neatest purest things——

Free. And I'll follow the great boy, and my blow at his mother: steal away the calf, and the cow will follow you.

Exit Jerry, followed by Freeman.

Enter, on the other side, Manly, widow Blackacre, and Oldfox.

Man. Damn your cause, can't you lose it without me? which you are like enough to do, if it be, as you say, an honest one: I will suffer no longer for't.

Wid. Nay, captain, I tell you, you are my prime witness; and the cause is just now coming on, Mr. *Splitcause* tells me. Lord, methinks you shou'd take a pleasure in walking here, as half you see now do; for they have no business here, I assure you.

Man. Yes; but I'll assure you then, their business is to persecute me: but d'ye think I'll stay any longer, to have a rogue, because he knows my name, pluck me aside, and whisper a news-book secret to me with a stinking breath? a second come piping angry from the court, and sputter in my face his tedious complaints against it? a third law-coxcomb, because he saw me once at a reader's dinner, come and put me a long law-case, to make a discovery of his indefatigable dulness, and my wearied patience? a fourth, a most barbarous civil rogue, who will keep a man half an hour in the crowd with a bow'd body, and a hat off, acting the reform'd sign of the *Salutation* tavern, to hear his bountiful professions of service and friendship, whilst he cares not if I were damn'd, and I am wishing him hang'd out of my way? I'd as soon run the gauntlet, as walk t'other turn.

Enter

Enter to them Jerry Blackacre without his bags, but laden with trinkets, which he endeavours to hide from his mother, and follow'd at a distance by Freeman.

Wid. O, are you come, sir? but where have you been, you ass? and how came you thus laden?

Ferr. Look here, forsooth mother; now here's a duck, here's a boar-cat, and here's an owl.

(Making a noise with cat-calls, and other such like instruments.)

Wid. Yes, there is an owl, sir.

Old. He's an ungracious bird indeed.

Wid. But go, thou trangame, and carry back those trangames, which thou hast stol'n or purloin'd; for no body wou'd trust a minor in *Westminster-Hall*, sure.

Ferr. Hold your self contented, forsooth: I have these commodities by a fair bargain and sale; and there stands my witness and creditor.

Wid. How's that! what, sir, d'ye think to get the mother, by giving the child a rattle? but where are my bags, my writings, you rascal?

Ferr. O law! where are they, indeed! *(Aside.)*

Wid. How, firrah? speak, come——

Man. You can tell her, *Freeman*, I suppose.

(Apart to him.)

Free. 'Tis true, I made one of your salt-water sharks steal 'em, whilst he was eagerly chusing his commodities, as he calls 'em, in order to my design upon his mother.

(Apart to him.)

Wid. Won't you speak? where were you, I say, you son of a——an unfortunate woman? O, major, I'm undone: they are all that concern my estate, my jointure, my husbands deed of gift, my evidences for all my suits now depending! what will become of them?

Free. I'm glad to hear this. *(Aside.)*

They'll be all safe, I warrant you, madam.

Wid. O where? where? come, you villain, along with me, and shew me where.

(Exeunt widow, Jerry, Oldfox.)

Manet

Manet Manly, Freeman.

Man. Thou hast taken the right way to get a widow, by making her great boy rebel; for when nothing will make a widow marry, she'll do't to cross her children. But canst thou in earnest marry this harpy, this volume of shrivell'd blur'd parchments and law, this attorney's desk?

Free. Ay, ay; I'll marry and live honestly, that is, give my creditors, not her, due benevolence, pay my debts.

Man. Thy creditors, you see, are not so barbarous as to put thee in prison; and wilt thou commit thy self to a noisom dungeon for thy life? which is the only satisfaction thou canst give thy creditors by this match.

Free. Why, is not she rich?

Man. Ay, but he that marries a widow for her money, will find himself as much mistaken, as the widow that marries a young fellow for due benevolence, as you call it.

Free. Why, d'ye think I shan't deserve wages? I'll drudge faithfully.

Man. I tell thee again, he that is the slave in the mine has the least propriety in the ore: you may dig, and dig; but if thou wouldst have her money, rather get to be her trustee than her husband; for a true widow will make, over her estate to any body, and cheat her self, rather than be cheated by her children, or a second husband.

Enter to them Jerry, *running in a fright.*

Jerr. O law! I'm undone, I'm undone; my mother will kill me; you said you'd stand by one.

Free. So I will, my brave squire, I warrant thee.

Jerr. Ay, but I dare not stay till she comes; for she's as furious, now she has lost her writings, as a bitch when she has lost her puppies.

Man. The comparison's handsome!

Jerr. O, she's here!

Enter Widow Blackacre *and* Oldfox.

Free. to the Sailor.] Take him, Jack, and make haste with him to your master's lodging; and be sure you keep him up till I come.

(Exit Jerry *and* Sailor.

Wid.

Wid. O my dear writings ! where's this heathen rogue, my minor ?

Free. Gone to drown or hang himself.

Wid. No, I know him too well ; he'll ne'er be *Felo de se* that way : but he may go and chuse a guardian of his own head, and so be *Felo de ses biens* ; for he has not yet chosen one.

Free. Say you so ? and he shan't want one.

Wid. But, now I think on't, 'tis you, sir, have put this cheat upon me ; for there is a saying, *Take hold of a maid by her smock, and a widow by her writings, and they cannot get from you.* But I'll play fast and loose with you yet, if there be law, and my minor and writings are not forthcoming ; I'll bring my action of detinue or trover. But first, I'll try to find out this guardianless graceless villain. Will you jog major ?

Man. If you have lost your evidence, I hope your causes cannot go on, and I may be gone ?

Wid. O no ; stay but a making water-while ; (as one may say) and I'll be with you again.

(*Exit Widow and Oldfox.*)

Manet Manly and Freeman.

Free. Well ; sure I am the first man that ever began a love intrigue in *Westminster-Hall*.

Man. No, sure ; for the love to a widow generally begins here : and as the widow's cause goes against the heir or executors, the jointure-rivals commence their suit to the widow.

Free. Well ; but how, pray, have you past your time here, since I was forc'd to leave you alone ? you have had a great deal of patience.

Man. Is this a place to be alone, or have patience in ? but I have had patience indeed ; for I have drawn upon me, since I came, but three quarrels, and two law-suits.

Free. Nay, faith, you are too crust to be let loose in the world : you shou'd be tied up again in your sea-kennel, call'd a ship. But how cou'd you quarrel here ?

Man. How cou'd I refrain ? a lawyer talk'd peremptorily

torily and saucily to me, and as good as gave me the lye.

Free. They do it so often to one another at the bar, that they make no bones on't elsewhere.

Man. However, I gave him a cuff on the ear ; whereupon he jogs two men, whose backs were turn'd to us, (for they were reading at a bookseller's) to witness I struck him, sitting the courts ; which office they so readily promis'd, that I call'd 'em rascals, and knights of the post. One of 'em presently calls two other absent witnesses, who were coming towards us at a distance ; whilst the other, with a whisper, desires to know my name, that he might have satisfaction by way of challenge, as t'other by way of writ ; but if it were not rather to direct his brother's writ, than his own challenge : there you see is one of my quarrels, and two of my law-suits.

Free. So ! ——— and the other two ?

Man. For advising a poet to leave of writing, and turn lawyer, because he is dull, and impudent, and says or writes nothing now but by precedent.

Free. And the third quarrel ?

Man. For giving more sincere advice to a handsome, well-dress'd, young fellow, (who ask'd it too) not to marry a wench that he lov'd, and I had lain with.

Free. Nay, if you will be giving your sincere advice to lovers and poets, you will not fail of quarrels.

Man. Or if I stay in this place ; for I see more quarrels crouding upon me : let's be gone, and avoid 'em.

Enter Novel at a distance, coming towards them.

A plague on him, that sneer is ominous to us, he is coming upon us, and we shall not be rid of him.

Nov. Dear bully, don't look so grum upon me ; you told me just now, you had forgiven me a little harmless raillery upon wooden legs last night.

Man. Yes, yes, pray be gone, I am talking of business.

Nov. Can't I hear it ? I love thee, and will be faithful, and always ———

Man. Impertinent. 'Tis business that concerns *Free-man* only.

Nov.

Nov. Well, I love *Freeman* too, and wou'd not divulge his secret: prithee speak, prithee, I must——

Man. Prithee let me be rid of thee, I must be rid of thee.

Nov. Faith, thou canst hardly, I love thee so. Come, I must know the business.

Man. So, I have it now.

(*Aside.*

Why, if you needs will know it, he has a quarrel, and his adversary bids him bring two friends with him: now I am one, and we are thinking who we shall have for a third.

Several crossing the stage.

Nov. A pox, there goes a fellow owes me an hundred pound, and goes out of town to morrow: I'll speak with him, and come to you presently. (*Exit Novel.*

Man. No, but you won't.

Free. You are dextrously rid of him.

Enter Oldfox.

Man. To what purpose, since here comes another, as impertinent? I know, by his grin, he is bound hither.

Old. Your servant, worthy noble captain: well I have left the widow, because she carried me from your company: for, faith, captain, I must needs tell thee, thou art the only officer in *England*, who was not an *Edgehill* officer, that I care for.

Man. I'm sorry for't.

Old. Why, woul'dst thou have me love them?

Man. Any body, rather than me.

Old. What, you're modest, I see; therefore too I love thee.

Man. No, I am not modest; but love to brag my self, and can't patiently hear you fight over the last civil war. Therefore go look out the fellow I saw just now here, that walks with his word and stockings out at heels, and let him tell you the history of that scar on his cheek, to give you occasion to shew yours got in the field at *Bloomsbury*, not that of *Edgehill*. Go to him, poor fellow; he is fasting, and has not yet the happiness this morning to stink of brandy and tobacco: go, give him some to hear you; I am busy.

Old.

Old. Well, i'gad, I love thee now, boy, for thy furliness: thou art no tame captain, I see, that will suffer—

Man. An old fox.

Old. All that shan't make me angry: I consider that thou art peevish, and fretting at some ill success at law. Prithee, tell me what ill luck you have met with here.

Man. You.

Old. Do I look like the picture of ill luck? gadfnouns, I love thee more and more: and shall I tell thee what made me love thee first?

Man. Do; that I may be rid of that damn'd quality and thee.

Old. 'Twas thy wearing that broad sword there.

Man. Here, *Freeman*, let's change: I'll never wear it more.

Old. How! you won't sure. Prithee, don't look like one of our holiday captains, now-a-days, with a bodkin by your side, you martinet rogues.

Man. O, then there's hopes.

(*Aside.*

What, d'ye find fault with martinet? let me tell you, sir, 'tis the best exercise in the world; the most ready, most easy, most graceful exercise that ever was us'd, and the most——

Old. Nay, nay, sir, no more; sir, your servant: if you praise martinet once, I have done with you, sir. Martinet! martinet!——

(*Exit Oldfox.*

Free. Nay, you have made him leave you as willingly, as ever he did an enemy; for he was truly for the king and parliament: for the parliament, in their list; and for the king in cheating 'em of their prey, and never hurting the king's party in the field.

Enter a lawyer towards them.

Man. A pox! this way: here's a lawyer I know threatening us with another greeting.

Lawy. Sir, sir, your very servant; I was afraid you had forgotten me.

Man. I was not afraid you had forgotten me.

Lawy. No, sir; we lawyers have pretty good memories.

Man. You ought to have by your wits.

Lawy. O, you are a merry gentleman, fir : I remember you were merry, when I was last in your company.

Man. I was never merry in thy company, Mr. lawyer, sure.

Lawy. Why, I'm sure you jok'd upon me, and sham'm'd me all night long.

Man. Sham'm'd ! prithee what barbarous law-term is that ?

Lawy. Shamming ! why, don't you know that ? 'tis all our way of wit, fir.

Man. I am glad I do not know it then. Shamming ! what does he mean by't, *Freeman* ?

Free. Shamming is telling you an insipid dull lye with a dull face, which the sly wag the author only laughs at himself ; and making himself believe 'tis a good jest, puts the sham only upon himself.

Man. So, your lawyer's jest, I find, like his practice, has more knavery than wit in't. I thou'd make the worst shammer in *England* : I must always deal ingenuously, as I will with you, Mr. Lawyer, and advise you to be seen rather with attorneys and solicitors, than such fellows as I am : they will credit your practice more.

Lawy. No, fir ; your company's an honour to me.

Man. No, faith ; go this way, there goes an attorney ; leave me for him : let it never be said a lawyer's civility did him hurt.

Lawy. No, worthy honour'd fir ; I'll not leave you for any attorney, sure.

Man. Unless he had a fee in his hand.

Lawy. Have you any business here, fir ? try me : I'd serve you sooner than any attorney breathing.

Man. Business——so, I have thought of a sure way.
(*Aside.*

Yes, faith, I have a little business.

Lawy. Have you so, fir : in what court, fir ? what is't, fir ? tell me but how I may serve you, and I'll do't fir, and take it for as great an honour——

Man. Faith, 'tis for a poor orphan of a sea-officer of mine, that has no money : but if it cou'd be follow'd in *Forma Pauperis*, and when the legacy's recovered——

Lawy.

The Plain Dealer.

Lawy. *Forma Pauperis*, sir!

Man. Ay, sir.

Several crossing the stage.

Lawy. Mr. Bumblecase, Mr. Bumblecase; a word with you. Sir, I beg your pardon at present; I have a little business —

Man. Which is not in *Forma Pauperis*. (*Ex. Lawyer.*)

Free. So, you have now found a way to be rid of people without quarrelling.

Enter Alderman.

Man. But here's a city rogue will stick as hard upon us, as if I ow'd him money.

Ald. Captain, noble sir, I am yours heartily, d'ye see why shou'd you avoid your old friends?

Man. And why shou'd you follow me? I owe you nothing.

Ald. Out of my hearty respects to you: for there is not a man in *England* —

Man. Thou wou'dst save from hanging with the expence of a shilling only.

Ald. Nay, nay, but captain, you are like enough to tell me —

Man. Truth, which you won't care to hear; therefore you had better go talk with some body else.

Ald. No, I know no body can inform me better of some young wit, or spendthrift, that has a good dipp'd seat and estate in *Middlesex*, *Hartfordshire*, *Essex*, or *Kent*; any of these wou'd serve my turn: now, if you knew of such an one, and wou'd but help —

Man. You to finish his ruin.

Ald. I'faith, you shou'd have a snip —

Man. Of your nose, you thirty-in-the-hundred rascals; wou'd you make me your squire setter, your baud for manners?

(*Takes him by the nose.*)

Ald. Oh!

Free. Hold, or here will be your third law-suit.

Ald. Gads precious, you hectoring person you, are you wild? I meant you no hurt, sir: I begin to think, as things go, land-security best, and have, for a conveni-

Lawy. O, you are a merry gentleman, sir : I remember you were merry, when I was last in your company.

Man. I was never merry in thy company, Mr. lawyer, sure.

Lawy. Why, I'm sure you jok'd upon me, and sham'd me all night long.

Man. Sham'd ! prithee what barbarous law-term is that ?

Lawy. Shamming ! why, don't you know that ? 'tis all our way of wit, sir.

Man. I am glad I do not know it then. Shamming ! what does he mean by't, *Freeman* ?

Free. Shamming is telling you an insipid dull lye with a dull face, which the sly wag the author only laughs at himself ; and making himself believe 'tis a good jest, puts the sham only upon himself.

Man. So, your lawyer's jest, I find, like his practice, has more knavery than wit in't. I shou'd make the worst shammer in *England* : I must always deal ingenuously, as I will with you, Mr. Lawyer, and advise you to be seen rather with attorneys and solicitors, than such fellows as I am : they will credit your practice more.

Lawy. No, sir ; your company's an honour to me.

Man. No, faith ; go this way, there goes an attorney ; leave me for him : let it never be said a lawyer's civility did him hurt.

Lawy. No, worthy honour'd sir ; I'll not leave you for any attorney, sure.

Man. Unless he had a fee in his hand.

Lawy. Have you any business here, sir ? try me : I'd serve you sooner than any attorney breathing.

Man. Business——so, I have thought of a sure way.

(*Aside.*

Yes, faith, I have a little business.

Lawy. Have you so, sir : in what court, sir ? what is't, sir ? tell me but how I may serve you, and I'll do't sir, and take it for as great an honour——

Man. Faith, 'tis for a poor orphan of a sea-officer of mine, that has no money : but if it cou'd be follow'd in *Forma Pauperis*, and when the legacy's recovered——

Lawy.

The Plain Dealer.

Lawy. Forma Pauperis, sir!

Man. Ay, sir.

Several crossing the stage.

Lawy. Mr. Bumblecase, Mr. Bumblecase; a word with you. Sir, I beg your pardon at present; I have a little business——

Man. Which is not in Forma Pauperis. (Ex. Lawyer.)

Free. So, you have now found a way to be rid of people without quarrelling.

Enter Alderman.

Man. But here's a city rogue will stick as hard upon us, as if I ow'd him money.

Ald. Captain, noble sir, I am yours heartily, d'ye see why shou'd you avoid your old friends?

Man. And why shou'd you follow me? I owe you nothing.

Ald. Out of my hearty respects to you: for there is not a man in England——

Man. Thou wou'dst save from hanging with the expence of a shilling only.

Ald. Nay, nay, but captain, you are like enough to tell me——

Man. Truth, which you won't care to hear; therefore you had better go talk with some body else.

Ald. No, I know no body can inform me better of some young wit, or spendthrift, that has a good dipp'd seat and estate in Middlesex, Hartfordshire, Essex, or Kent; any of these wou'd serve my turn: now, if you knew of such an one, and wou'd but help——

Man. You to finish his ruin.

Ald. I'faith, you shou'd have a snip——

Man. Of your nose, you thirty-in-the-hundred rascal; wou'd you make me your squire setter, your baud for mannors?

(Takes him by the nose.)

Ald. Oh!

Free. Hold, or here will be your third law-suit.

Ald. Gads precious, you hectoring person you, are you wild? I meant you no hurt, sir: I begin to think, as things go, land-security best, and have, for a conveni-

ent mortgage, some ten, fifteen, or twenty thousand pound by me.

Man. Then go lay it out upon an hospital, and take a mortgage of heaven, according to your city custom ; for you think by laying out a little money to hook in that too hereafter : do, I say, and keep the poor you've made by taking forfeitures, that heaven may not take yours.

Ald. No, to keep the cripples you make this war : this war spoils our trade.

Man. Damn your trade ; 'tis the better for't.

Ald. What, will you speak against our trade ?

Man. And dare you speak against the war, our trade ?

Ald. Well, he maybe a convoy of ships I am concern'd in. (*Aside.*

Come, captain, I will have a fair correspondence with you, say what you will.

Man. Then prithee be gone.

Ald. No, faith ; prithee, captain, let's go drink a dish of lac'd coffee, and talk of the times : come, I'll treat you ; nay, you shall go, for I have no business here.

Man. But I have.

Ald. To pick up a man to give thee a dinner : come, I'll do thy business for thee.

Man. Faith, now I think on't, so you may, as well as any man ; for 'tis to pick up a man to be bound with me, to one who expects city security for——

Ald. Nay, then your servant, captain ; business must be done.

Man. Ay, if it can : but hark you, alderman, without you——

Ald. Business, sir, I say, must be done ; and there's an officer of the treasury I have an affair with—— (*Several crossing the stage. Exit Alderman.*

Man. You see now what the mighty friendship of the world is ; what all ceremony, embraces, and plentiful professions come to : you are no more to believe a professing friend, than a threatening enemy ; and as no man hurts you, that tells you he'll do you a mischief, no man, you see, is your servant who says he is so. Why, the devil, then shou'd a man be troubled with the flattery of knaves,

knaves, if he be not a fool or cully; or with the fondness of fools, if he be not a knave or cheat?

Free. Only for his pleasure; for there is some in laughing at fools, and disappointing knaves.

Man. That's a pleasure, I think, wou'd cost you too dear, as well as marrying your widow to disappoint her. But, for my part, I have no pleasure by 'em but in despising 'em, wheresoe'er, I meet 'em; and then the pleasure of hoping so to be rid of 'em. But now my comfort is, I am not worth a shilling in the world, which all the world shall know; and then I'm sure I shall have none of 'em come near me.

Free. A very pretty comfort, which I think you pay too dear for. But is the twenty pound gone since the morning?

Man. To my boats-crew: wou'd you have the poor, honest, brave fellows want?

Free. Rather than you, or I.

Man. Why, art thou without money? thou who art a friend to every body?

Free. I ventur'd my last stake upon the squire, to nick him of his mother; and cannot help you to a dinner, unless you will go dine with my lord——

Man. No, no; the ordinary is too dear for me, where flattery must pay for my dinner: I am no herald, or poet.

Free. We'll go then to the bishop's——

Man. There you must flatter the old philosophy: I cannot renounce my reason for a dinner.

Free. Why then let's go to your alderman's.

Man. Hang him, rogue! that were not to dine; for he makes you drunk with lees of sack before dinner, to take away your stomach: and there you must call usury and extortion god's blessing, or the honest turning of the penny; hear him brag of the leather breeches in which he trotted first to town, and make a greater noise with his money in his parlour, than his casheers do in his counting-house, without hopes of borrowing a shilling.

Free. Ay, a pox on't, 'tis like dining with the great gamesters; and when thy fall to their common dessert,

see the heaps of gold drawn on all hands, without going to twelve. Let us go to my lady Goodly's.

Man. There to flatter her looks : you must mistake her grandchildren for her own ; praise her cook, that she may rail at him ; and feed her dogs, not your self.

Free. What d'ye think of eating with your lawyer then ?

Man. Eat with him ! damn him : to hear him employ his barbarous eloquence in a reading upon the two and thirty good bits in a shoulder of veal ; and be forc'd your self to praise the cold bribe-pye that stinks ; and drink law-*French* wine as rough and harsh as his law-*French*. A pox on him, I'd rather dine in the temple-rounds or walks, with the knights without noses, or the knights of the post, who are honefter fellows, and better company. But let us home, and try our fortune ; for I'll stay no longer here for your damn'd widow.

Free. Well, let us go home then ; for I must go for my damn'd widow, and look after my new damn'd charge. Three or four hundred years ago a man might have din'd in this hall

Man. But now the lawyer only here : sed

And, bully like, by quarrels gets his bread.

ACT IV. SCENE I

Manly's Lodgings.

Enter Manly and Fidelia.

Manly.

WELL, there's success in thy face : hast thou prevail'd ? say.

Fid. As I cou'd wish, sir.

Man. So ; I told thee what thou wert fit for, and thou wou'dst not believe me. Come, thank me for bringing thee

then acquainted with thy genius. well, thou hast mollified her heart for me?

Fid. No, sir, not so; but what's better.

Man. How! what's better!

Fid. I shall harden your heart against her.

Man. Have a care, sir; my heart is too much in earnest to be fooled with, and my desire at height, and needs no delays to incite it: what, you are too good a pimp already, and know how to endear pleasure by with-holding it? but leave off your page's bawdy-house tricks, sir; and tell me, will she be kind?

Fid. Kinder than you cou'd wish, sir.

Man. So then: well, prithee, what said she?

Fid. She said——

Man. What? thou'rt so tedious: speak comfort to me; what?

Fid. That of all things you are her aversion.

Man. How!

Fid. That she wou'd sooner take a bedfellow out of an hospital, and disengage into her arms, than you.

Man. What?

Fid. That she wou'd rather trust her honour with a dissolute debauch'd hector, nay worse, with a finical baffled coward, all over loathsome with affectation of the fine gentleman.

Man. What's all this you say?

Fid. Nay, that my offers of your love to her were more offensive, than when parents woo their virgin-daughters to the enjoyment of riches only; and that you were in all circumstances as nauseous to her as a husband on compulsion.

Man. Hold; I understand you not.

Fid. So, 'twill work I see.

(*Aside.*

Man. Did you not tell me——

Fid. She call'd you ten thousand ruffians.

Man. Hold, I say.

Fid. Brutes——

Man. Hold.

Fid. Sea-monsters——

Man.

The Plain Dealer.

Man. Damn your intelligence : hear me a little now.

Fid. Nay, surly coward she call'd you too.

Man. Won't you hold yet ? hold, or——

Fid. Nay, sir, pardon me ; I cou'd not but tell you she had the baseness, the injustice, to call you coward, sir ; coward, coward, sir.

Man. Not yet——

Fid. I've done ; coward, sir.

Man. Did not you say she was kinder than I cou'd wish her ?

Fid. Yes, sir.

Man. How then ?——O——I understand you now, At first she appear'd in rage and disdain ; the truest sign of a coming woman : but at last you prevail'd it seems ; did you not ?

Fid. Yes, Sir.

Man. So then ; let's know that only : come prithee, without delays. I'll kiss thee for that news beforehand.

Fid. So ; the kiss I'm sure is welcome to me, whatsoever the news will be to you. (*Aside.*)

Man. Come, speak, my dear volunteer.

Fid. How welcome were that kind word too, if it were not for another woman's sake ! (*Aside.*)

Man. What won't you speak ? you prevail'd for me at last, you say ?

Fid. No, sir.

Man. No more of your fooling, sir ; it will not agree with my impatience or temper.

Fid. Then not to fool you, sir, I spoke to her for you, but prevail'd for my self ; she wou'd not hear me when I spoke in your behalf ; but bid me say what I wou'd in my own, tho she gave me no occasion, she was so coming, and so was kinder, sir, than you cou'd wish ; which I was only afraid to let you know, without some warning.

Man. How's this ? young man, you are of a lying age ; but I must hear you out, and if——

Fid. I wou'd not abuse you, and cannot wrong her by any report of her, she is so wicked.

Man. How, wicked ! had she the impudence, at the second sight of you only——

Fid.

Fid. Impudence, fir! oh, he has impudence enough to put a court out of countenance, and debauch a stews.

Man. Why, what said she?

Fid. Her tongue, I confess, was silent; but her speaking eyes gloted such things more immodest, and lascivious, than ravishers can act, or woman under a confinement think.

Man. I know there are those whose eyes reflect more obscenity, than the glasses in alcoves; but there are others too who use a little art with their looks, to make 'em seem more beautiful, not more loving: which vain young fellows, like you, are apt to interpret in their own favour and to the lady's wrong.

Fid. Seldom, fir; pray have you a care of gloting eyes; for he that loves to gaze upon 'em, will find at last a thousand fools and cuckolds in 'em instead of *Cupids*.

Man. Very well, fir: but, what, you had on'y eye-kindness from *Olivia*?

Fid. I tell you again, fir, no woman sticks there; eye-promises of love they only keep; nay they are contracts which make you sure of 'em. In short, fir, she seeing me, with shame and amazement dumb, unactive, and resistless, threw her twisting arms about my neck, and smother'd me with a thousand tasteless kisses: believe me, fir, they were so to me.

Man. Why did you not avoid 'em then?

Fid. I fenced with her eager arms, as you did with the grapples of the enemy's fireship; and nothing but cutting 'em off, cou'd have freed me.

Man. Damn'd, damn'd woman, that cou'd be so false and infamous! and damn'd, damn'd heart of mine, that cannot yet be false, tho' so infamous! what easy, tame, suffering, trampled things does that little god of talking cowards make of us! but——

Fid. So! it works, I find, as I expected. (*Aside.*

Man. But she was false to me before, she told me so her self, and yet I cou'd not quite believe it; but she was, so that her second falseness is a favour to me, not an injury, in revenging me upon the man that wrong'd me first of her love. Her love! —— a whore's, a witch's love! —— but

— but what, did she not kiss well, sir? I'm sure I thought her lips— but I must not think of 'em more — but yet they are such I cou'd still kiss — grow to — and then tear of with my teeth, grind 'em into mam-mocks, and spit 'em into her cuckold's face.

Fid. Poor man, how uneasy he is! I have hardly the heart to give him so much pain, tho withal I give him a cure, and to my self new life. (*Aside.*

Man. But what, her kisses sure cou'd not but warm you into desire at last, or a compliance with her's at least?

Fid. Nay, more I confess —

Man. What more? speak.

Fid. All you cou'd fear had pass'd between us, if I cou'd have been made to wrong you, sir, in that nature.

Man. Cou'd have been made; you lye, you did.

Fid. Indeed, sir, 'twas impossible for me; besides, we were interrupted by a visit; but, I confess, she wou'd not let me stir, till I promis'd to return to her again within this hour, as soon as it shou'd be dark; by which time she wou'd dispose of her visit, and her servants, and her self for my reception: which I was fain to promise to get from her.

Man. Ha!

Fid. But if ever I go near her again, may you, sir, think me as false to you, as she is; hate and renounce me, as you ought to do her, and I hope will do now.

Man. Well, but now I think on't, you shall keep your word with your lady. What, a young fellow, and fail the first, nay, so tempting an assignation!

Fid. How sir?

Man. I say, you shall go to her when 'tis dark, and shall not disappoint her.

Fid. I, sir! I shou'd disappoint her more by going, for —

Man. How so?

Fid. Her impudence and injustice to you will make me disappoint her love, and loath her.

Man. Come, you have my leave; and if you disgust her, I'll go with you, and act love, whilst you shall talk it only.

Fid.

Fid. You, sir! nay, then I'll never go near her. You act love, sir! you must act it indeed, after all I have said to you. Think of your honour, sir, love——

Man. Well, call it revenge, and that is honourable: I'll be reveng'd on her; and thou shalt be my second.

Fid. Not in a base action, sir, when you are your own enemy: O go not near her, sir, for heaven's sake, for your own, think not of it.

Man. How concern'd you are! I thought I shou'd catch you. What, you are my rival at last, and are in love with her your self; and have spoken ill of her out of your love to her, not me; and therefore wou'd not have me go to her.

Fid. Heaven witness for me, 'tis because I love you only, I wou'd not have you go to her.

Man. Come, come, the more I think on't, the more I'm satisfied you do love her: those kisses, young man, I knew were irresistible; 'tis certain.

Fid. There is nothing certain in the world, sir, but my truth, and your courage.

Man. Your servant, sir. Besides false and ungrateful, as she has been to me; and tho I may believe her hatred to me great as you report it; yet I cannot think you are so soon, and at that rate, belov'd by her, tho you may endeavour it.

Fid. Nay, if that be all, and you doubt it still, sir, I will conduct you to her; and unseen, your ears shall judge of her falseness, and my truth to you, if that will satisfy you.

Man. Yes, there is some satisfaction in being quite out of doubt; because 'tis that alone with-holds us from the pleasure of revenge.

Fid. Revenge! what revenge can you have, sir? disdain is best reveng'd by scorn; and faithless love, by loving another, and making her happy with the other's loofings: which, if I might advise——

Enter Freeman.

Man. Not a word more.

Free. What, are you talking of love yet, captain? I thought you had done with't.

Man.

Man. Why, what did you hear me say?

Free. Something imperfectly of love, I think.

Man. I was only wondring why fools, rascals, and desertless wretches, shou'd still have the better of men of merit with all women, as much as with their own common mistrefs, fortune.

Free. Because most women, like fortune, are blind, seem to do all things in jest, and take pleasure in extravagant actions; their love deserves neither thanks, or blame, for they cannot help it: 'tis all sympathy; therefore the noisy, the finical, the talkative, the cowardly, and effeminate, have the better of the brave, the reasonable, and man of honour; for they have no more reason in their love or kindness, than fortune her self.

Man. Yes, they have their reason: first, honour in a man they fear too much to love; and sense in a lover upbraids their want of it; and they hate any thing that disturbs their admiration of themselves; but they are of that vain number, who had rather shew their false generosity, in giving away profusely to worthless flatterers, than in paying just debts. And in short, all women, like fortune, (as you say) and rewards, are lost, by too much meriting.

Fid. All women, sir! sure there are some, who have no other quarrel to a lover's merit, but that it begets their despair of him.

Man. Thou art young enough to be credulous; but we ———

Enter 1 Sailor.

1 Sail. Here are now below, the scolding, dagled gentlewoman, and that major old—— old——fop, I think you call him.

Free. Oldfox, prithee bid 'em come up, with your leave, captain, for I can talk with her upon the square; if I shall not disturb you.

Man. No; for I'll be gone. Come, volunteer.

Free. Nay, pray stay; the scene between us will not be so tedious to you as you think: besides, you shall see how I rigg'd my squire out, with the remains of my shipwreck'd wardrobe; he is under your sea *Valet-de-Cham-*

bre's

bre's hands, and by this time dress'd, and will be worth your seeing. Stay, and I'll fetch my fool.

Man. No; you know I cannot easily laugh: besides, my volunteer and I have business abroad.

(*Ex. Manly, Fidelia on one side; Freeman on t'other.*)

Enter Major Oldfox and Widow Blackacre.

Wid. What, no body here! did not the fellow say he was within?

Old. Yes, lady; and he may be perhaps a little busy at present; but, if you think the time long till he comes, (*unfolding papers*) I'll read you here some of the fruits of my leisure, the overflowings of my fancy and pen. (To value me right, she must know my parts) (*Aside.* Come——

Wid. No, no; I have reading work enough of my own, in my bag, I thank you.

Old. I, law, madam; but here's a poem, in blank verse, which I think a handsom declaration of one's passion.

Wid. O! if you talk of declarations, I'll shew you one of the prettiest penn'd things, which I mended too my self, you must know.

Old. Nay, lady, if you have used your self so much to the reading harsh law, that you hate smooth poetry; here is a character for you, of——

Wid. A character! nay, then I'll shew you my bill in *Chancery* here, that gives you such a character of my adversary, makes him as black——

Old. Pshaw; away, away, lady. But if you think the character too long, here is an epigram, not above twenty lines, upon a cruel lady; who decreed her servant shou'd hang himself, to demonstrate his passion.

Wid. Decreed! if you talk of decreeing, I have such a decree here, drawn by the finest clerk——

Old. O lady, lady, all interruption, and no sense between us, as if we were lawyers at the bar! but I had forgot, *Apollo* and *Littleton* never lodge in a head together. If you hate verses, I'll give you a cast of my politicks in prose: 'tis a letter to a friend in the country; which
is

is now the way of all such sober solid persons as my self, when they have a mind to publish their disgust to the times; tho perhaps, between you and I, they have no friend in the country. And sure a politick, serious person may as well have a feign'd friend in the country to write to, as an idle poet a feign'd mistress to write to. And so here's my letter to a friend, or no friend, in the country, concerning the late conjuncture of affairs, in relation to *Coffee-Houses*: or, *the Coffee-Man's case*.

Wid. Nay, if your letter have a case in't, 'tis something; but first I'll read you a letter of mine, to a friend in the country, call'd a letter of *Attorney*.

Enter to them Freeman, and Jerry Blackacre, in an old gaudy suit, and red breeches of Freeman's.

Old. What, interruption still! O the plague of interruption! worse to an author, than the plague of criticks! (*Aside.*

Wid. What's this I see, *Jerry Blackacre*, my minor, in red breeches! what, hast thou left the modest seemly garb of gown and cap, for this? and have I lost all my good *Inns of chancery*-breeding upon thee then? and thou wilt go a breeding thy self from our *inn of chancery* and *westminster-hall*, at coffee-houses, and ordinaries, play-houses, tennis-courts, and bawdy-houses?

Ferr. Ay, ay, what then? perhaps I will; but what's that to you? here's my guardian and tutor now, forsooth, that I am out of your huckster's hands.

Wid. How! thou hast not chosen him for thy guardian yet?

Ferr. No, but he has chosen me for his charge, and that's all one; and I'll do any thing he'll have me, and go all the world over with him; to ordinaries, and bawdy-houses, or any where else.

Wid. To ordinaries and bawdy-houses! have a care, minor, thou wilt enfeeble there thy estate and body: do not go to ordinaries and bawdy-houses, good *Ferry*.

Ferr. Why, how come you to know any ill by bawdy-houses? you never had any hurt by 'em, had you, forsooth? pray hold your self contented; if I do go where money and wenches are to be had, you may thank your

your self; for you us'd me so unnaturally, you wou'd never let me have a penny to go abroad with; nor so much as come near the garret where your maidens lay; nay, you wou'd not so much as let me play at hotcockles with 'em, nor have any recreation with 'em, tho' one shou'd have kiss'd you behind, you were so unnatural a mother, so you were

Free. Ay, a very unnatural mother, faith, squire.

Wid. But, *Jerry*, consider thou art yet but a minor; however, if thou wilt go home with me again, and be a good child, thou shalt see——

Free. Madam, I must have a better care of my heir under age, then so; I wou'd sooner trust him alone with a stale waiting-woman and a person, than with his widow-mother, and her lover or lawyer.

Wid. Why, thou villain, part mother and minor! rob me of my child and my writings! but thou shalt find there's law; and as in the case of ravishment of guard—*Westminster* the second.

Old. Young gentleman, squire, pray be rul'd by your mother, and your friends.

Ferr. Yes, I'll be rul'd by my friends, therefore not by my mother, so I won't: I'll chuse him for my guardian till I am of age; nay, may be, for as long as I live.

Wid. Wilt thou so, thou wretch? and when thou'rt of age, thou wilt sign, seal and deliver too, wilt thou?

Ferr. Yes marry will I, if you go there too.

Wid. O do not squeeze wax, son; rather go to ordinaries, and bawdy-houses, than squeeze wax: if thou dost that, farewell the goodly mannor of *Blackacre*, with all its woods, underwoods, and appurtenances whatever. Oh, oh! (Weeps.)

Free. Come, madam, in short, you see I am resolv'd to have a share in the estate, yours or your son's; if I cannot get you, I'll keep him who is less coy you find; but, if you wou'd have your son again, you must take me too. Peace, or war? love, or law? you see my hostage is in my hand: I'm in possession.

Wid. Nay, if one of us must be ruin'd, e'en let it be him. By my body, a good one! did you ever know yet

a widow marry or not marry for the sake of her child? I'd have you to know, sir, I shall be hard enough for you both yet, without marrying you; if *Ferry* won't be rul'd by me; what say you, booby, will you be rul'd? speak.

Ferr. Let one alone, can't you?

Wid. Wilt thou chuse him for guardian, whom I refuse for husband?

Ferr. Ay, to chuse, I thank you.

Wid. And are all my hopes frustrated? shall I never hear thee put cases again to *John* the butler, or our vicar? never see thee amble the circuit with the judges; and hear thee, in our town hall, louder than the cryer?

Ferr. No; for I have taken my leave of lawyering and pettifogging.

Wid. Pettifogging! thou profane villain, hast thou so? Pettifogging!—then you shall take your leave of me, and your estate too; thou shalt be an alien to me and it for ever. Pettifogging!

Ferr. O, but if you go there too, mother, we have the deeds and settlements, I thank you: wou'd you cheat me of my estate, i'fac?

Wid. No, no, I will not cheat your little brother *Bob*; for thou wert not born in wedlock.

Free. How's that;

Ferr. How? what querk has she got in her head now?

Wid. I say, thou canst not, shalt not inherit the *Black-acre's* estate.

Ferr. Why? why, forsooth? what d'ye mean, if you go there too?

Wid. Thou art but my base child; and according to the law, canst not inherit it: nay, thou art not so much as bastard eigne

Ferr. What, what, am I then the son of a whore, mother?

Wid. The law says——

Free. Madam, we know what the law says; but have a care what you say: do not let your passion to ruin your son, ruin your reputation.

Wid.

Wid. Hang reputation, fir, am not I a widow? have no husband, nor intend to have any? nor wou'd you, I suppose, now have me for a wife. So, I think now I'm reveng'd on my son and you, without marrying, as I told you.

Free. But consider, madam.

Ferr. What, have you no shame left in you mother?

Wid. Wonder not at it, major, 'tis often the poor press'd widow's case, to give up her honour to save her jointure; and seem to be a light woman, rather than marry: as some young men, they say, pretend to have the filthy disease, and lose their credit with most women, to avoid the importunities of some.

(Aside to Oldfox.)

Free. But one word with you, madam.

Wid. No, no, fir. Come, major, let us make haste now to the prerogative court.

Old. But, lady, if what you say be true, will you stigmatize your reputation on record? and, if it be not true, how will you prove it?

Wid. Pshaw! I can prove any things; and for my reputation, know, major, a wise woman will no more value her reputation, in disinheriting a rebellious son of a good estate, than she wou'd in getting him, to inherit an estate.

(Exit Wid. and Old.)

Free. Madam—we must not let her go so, squire.

Ferr. Nay, the devil can't stop her tho' if she has a mind to't. But come, bully-guardian, we'll go and advise with three attorneys, two proctors, two solicitors, and a shrewd man of *White-Friars*, neither attorney, proctor, or solicitor, but as pure a pimp to the law as any of 'em; and sure all they will be hard enough for her, for I fear, bully-guardian, you are too good a joker to have any law in your head.

Free. Thou'rt in the right on't, squire, I understand no law; especially that against bastards, since I'm sure the custom is against that law; and more people get estates by being so, than lose 'em.

(Exeunt.)

The Scene changes to Olivia's Lodging.

Enter Lord Plausible, and Boy with a candle.

L. Plaus. Little gentleman, your most obedient, faithful, humble servant: where, I beseech you, is that divine person, your noble lady?

Boy. Gone out, my lord; but commanded me to give you this letter. *(Gives him a letter.*

Enter to him Novel.

L. Plaus. Which he must not observe.

(Aside. Puts it up.

Nov. Hey, boy, where is thy lady?

Boy. Gone out, sir; but I must beg a word with you. *(Gives him a letter, and exit.*

Nov. For me? so. *(Puts up the letter.*

Servant, servant, my lord; you see the lady knew of your coming, for she is gone out.

L. Plaus. Sir, I humbly beseech you not to censure the lady's good breeding: she has reason to use more liberty with me, than with any other man.

Nov. How, viscount how?

L. Plaus. Nay, I humbly beseech you, be not in choler; where there is most love, there may be most freedom.

Nov. Nay, then 'tis time to come to an eclaircissement with you, and to tell you, you must think no more of this lady's love.

L. Plaus. Why, under correction, dear sir?

Nov. There are reasons, reasons, viscount.

L. Plaus. What, I beseech you, noble sir?

Nov. Prithee, prithee, be not impertinent, my lord; some of you lords are such conceited, well-assured impertinent rogues.

L. Plaus. And you noble wits, are so full of shamming and drolling, one knows not where to have you seriously.

Nov. Well, you shall find me in bed with this lady, one of these days.

L. Plaus.

L. Plaus. Nay, I beseech you, spare the lady's honour; for her's and mine will be all one shortly.

Nov. Prithee, my lord, be not an ass: dost thou think to get her from me? I have had such encouragements—

L. Plaus. I have not been thought unworthy of 'em.

Nov. What not like mine! come to an eclaircissement, as I said.

L. Plaus. Why, seriously then, she has told me, viscountess founded prettily.

Nov. And me, that *Novel* was a name she wou'd sooner change her's for, than for any title in *England*.

L. Plaus. She has commended the softness and respectfulness of my behaviour.

Nov. She has prais'd the briskness of my raillery of all things, man.

L. Plaus. The sleepiness of my eyes she lik'd.

Nov. Sleepiness! dulness, dulness. But the fierceness of mine she ador'd.

L. Plaus. The brightness of my hair she lik'd.

Nov. The brightness! no, the greasiness, I warrant! But the blackness and lustre of mine she admires.

L. Plaus. The gentleness of my smile.

Nov. The subtilty of my leer.

L. Plaus. The clearness of my complexion.

Nov. The redness of my lips.

L. Plaus. The whiteness of my teeth.

Nov. My janty way of picking them.

L. Plaus. The sweetness of my breath.

Nov. Ha, ha!——nay, then she abus'd you, 'tis plain; for you know what *Manly* said: the sweetness of your pulvillio she might mean; but for your breath! ha, ha, ha. Your breath is such, man, that nothing but tobacco can perfume; and your complexion nothing cou'd mend but the small-pox.

L. Plaus. Well, sir, you may please to be merry; but, to put you out of all doubt, sir, she has receiv'd some jewels from me, of value.

Nov. And presents from me; besides what I presented her jantly, by way of ombre, of three or four hundred

dred pounds value, which I'm sure are the earnest pence for our love-bargain.

L. Plaus. Nay, then, sir, with your favour, and to make an end of all your hopes, look you there, sir, she has writ to me——

Nov. How! how! well, well, and so she has to me; look you there——

(Deliver to each other their letters.)

L. Plaus. What's here?

Nov. How's this?

Reads out.

My dear lord,

You'll excuse me, for breaking my word with you, since 'twas to oblige, not offend you; for I am only gone a-broad but to disappoint Novel, and meet you in the drawing-room; where I expect you, with as much impatience, as when I us'd to suffer Novel's visits, the most impertinent fop, that ever affected the name of a wit, therefore not capable, I hope, to give you jealousy; for, for your sake alone, you saw I renounc'd an old lover, and will do all the world. Burn the letter, but lay up the kindness of it in your heart, with your

OLIVIA.

Very fine! but pray let's see mine.

L. Plaus. I understand it not; but sure she cannot think so of me.

Reads the other letter.

Nov. **H**UM! ha!—meet—for your sake——burn——quitted an old lover——world——burn——in your heart with your

OLIVIA.

Just the same, the names only alter'd.

L. Plaus. Surely there must be some mistake, or some body has abus'd her, and us.

Nov. Yes, you are abus'd, no doubt on't, my lord; but I'll to *White-Hall*, and see.

L. Plaus. And I, where I shall find you are abus'd.

Nov.

Nov. Where, if it be so, for our comfort, we cannot fail of meeting with fellow sufferers enough; for as *Freeman* said of another, she stands in the drawing-room, like the glass, ready for all comers, to set their gallantry by her: and like the glass too, lets no man go from her, unsatisfied with himself. (*Ex. ambo.*)

Enter Olivia and Boy.

Oliv. Both here, and just gone?

Boy. Yes, madam.

Oliv. But are you sure neither saw you deliver the other a letter?

Boy. Yes, yes, madam, I am very sure.

Oliv. Go then to the *Old Exchange*, to *Westminster*, *Holbourn*, and all the other places I told you of; I shall not need you these two hours: be gone, and take the candle with you, and be sure you leave word again below, I am gone out, to all that ask.

Boy. Yes, madam.

(*Exit.*)

Oliv. And my new lover will not ask I'm sure; he has his lesson, and cannot miss me here, tho' in the dark: which I have purposely design'd, as a remedy against my blushing gallant's modesty; for young lovers, like game-cocks, are made bolder by being kept without light.

Enter her husband Vernish as from a journey.

Ver. Where is she? darkness every where! (*Softly.*)

Oliv. What, come before your time? my soul! my life! your haste has augmented your kindness; and let me thank you for it thus, and thus —— (*Embracing and kissing him.*) And tho', my soul, the little time since you left me has seem'd an age to my impatience, sure it is yet but seven ——

Ver. How! who's that you expect after seven?

Oliv. Ha! my husband return'd! and have I been throwing away so many kind kisses on my husband, and wrong'd my lover already? (*Aside.*)

Ver. Speak, I say, who was't you expected after seven?

Oliv.

Oliv. What shall I say? — oh — (*Aside.*) Why 'tis but seven days, is it, dearest, since you went out of town? and I expected you not so soon.

Ver. No, sure; 'tis but five days since I left you.

Oliv. Pardon my impatience, dearest, I thought 'em seven at least.

Ver. Nay then —

Oliv. But, my life, you shall never stay half so long from me again; you shan't indeed, by this kiss you shan't.

Ver. No, no; but why alone in the dark?

Oliv. Blame not my melancholy in your absence — but, my soul, since you went, I have strange news to tell you: *Manly* is return'd.

Ver. *Manly* return'd! fortune forbid.

Oliv. Met with the *Dutch* in the channel, fought, sunk his ship, and all he carried with him. He was here with me yesterday.

Ver. And did you own our marriage to him?

Oliv. I told him I was married, to put an end to his love and my trouble; but to whom, is yet a secret kept from him and all the world. And I have us'd him so scurvily, his great spirit will ne'er return to reason it farther with me: I have sent him to sea again I warrant.

Ver. 'Twas bravely done. And sure he will now hate the shore more than ever, after so great a disappointment. Be you sure only to keep a while our great secret, till he be gone: In the mean time I'll lead the easy honest fool by the nose, as I use to do; and whilst he stays, rail with him at thee; and when he's gone, laugh with thee at him. But have you his cabinet of jewels safe? part not with a seed-pearl to him, to keep him from starving.

Oliv. Nor from hanging.

Ver. He cannot recover 'em; and, I think, will scorn to beg 'em again.

Oliv. But, my life, have you taken the thousand guineas he left in my name out of the gold-smith's hands?

Ver. Ay, ay; they are remov'd to another gold-smith's.

Oliv.

Oliv. Ay, but, my soul, you had best have a care he find not where the money is: for his present wants (as I'm inform'd) are such, as will make him inquisitive enough.

Ver. You say true, and he knows the man too; but I'll remove it to-morrow.

Oliv. To-morrow! O do not stay till to-morrow: go to-night, immediately.

Ver. Now I think on't, you advise well, and I will go presently.

Oliv. Presently! instantly: I will not let you stay a jot.

Ver. I will then, tho I return not home till twelve.

Oliv. Nay, tho not till morning, with all my heart: go, dearest; I am impatient till you are gone——

[Thrusts him out.]

So, I have at once now brought about those two grateful businesses, which all prudent women do together, secured money and pleasure; and now all interruptions of the last are remov'd. Go, husband, and come up friend: just the buckets in the well; the absence of one brings the other. But I hope, like them too, they will not meet in the way, jostle, and clash together.

Enter Fidelia, and Manly treading softly, and staying behind at some distance.

So are you come? (but not the husband bucket, I hope, again.) who's there? my dearest? [Softly.]

Fid. My life——

Oliv. Right, right: where are thy lips? here take the dumb and best welcomes, kisses and embraces; 'tis not a time for idle words. In a duel of love, as in others, parlying shews basely. Come, we are alone; and now the word is only satisfaction, and defend not thy self.

Man. How's this? why she makes love like a devil in a play; and in this darkness, which conceals her angel's face, if I were apt to be afraid, I shou'd think her a devil.

[Aside.]

Oliv. What, you traverse ground, young gentleman.

[Fidelia avoiding her.]

Fid. I take breath only.

Man.

Man. Good heavens! how was I deceiv'd! [*Aside.*]

Oliv. Nay, you are a coward; what, are you afraid of the fierceness of my love?

Fid. Yes, madam, lest its violence might presage its change; and I must needs be afraid you wou'd leave me quickly, who cou'd desert so brave a gentleman as *Manly*.

Oliv. O name not his name! for in a time of stolen joys, as this is, the filthy name of husband were not a more allaying sound.

Man. There's some comfort yet.

(*Aside.*

Fid. but did you not love him?

Oliv. Never. How cou'd you think it?

Fid. Because he thought it; who is a man of that sense, nice discerning, and diffidency, that I shou'd think it hard to deceive him.

Oliv. No; he that distrusts most the world, trusts most to himself, and is but the more easily deceiv'd, because he thinks he can't be deceiv'd: his cunning is like the coward's sword, by which he is oftner worsted than defended

Fid. Yet, sure, you us'd no common art to deceive him.

Oliv. I knew he lov'd his own singular moroseness so well, as to dote upon any copy of it; wherefore I feign'd an hatred to the world too, that he might love me in earnest: but, if it had been hard to deceive him, I am sure 'twere much harder to love him. A dogged, ill-manner'd—

Fid. D'ye hear her, sir, pray hear her.

[*Aside to Manly.*

Oliv. Surly, untractable, snarling brute! he! a mastiff-dog were as fit a thing to make a gallant of.

Man. Ay, a goat, or monkey, were fitter for thee.

(*Aside.*

Fid. I must confess, for my part, tho my rival, I cannot but say he has a manly handsomness in's face and mien.

Oliv. So has a *Saracen* in the sign,

Fid. Is proper, and well made,

Oliv. As a drayman.

Fid. Has wit,

Oliv.

Oliv. He rails at all mankind.

Fid. And undoubted courage.

Oliv. Like the hangman's; can murder a man when his hands are ty'd. He has cruelty indeed; which is no more courage, than his railing is wit.

Man. Thus women, and men like women, are too hard for us, when they think we do not hear 'em: and reputation like other mistresses, is never true to a man in his absence.

(*Aside.*)

Fid. He is——

Oliv. Prithee no more of him: I thought I had satisfy'd you enough before, that he could never be a rival for you to apprehend. And you need not be more assur'd of my aversion to him, but by the last testimony of my love to you; which I am ready to give you. Come, my soul, this way——

(*Pulls Fidelia.*)

Fid. But, madam, what cou'd make you dissemble love to him, when 'twas so hard a thing for you; and flatter his love to you?

Oliv. That which makes all the world flatter and dissemble, 'twas his money: I had a real passion for that. Yet I lov'd not that so well, as for it to take him: for as soon as I had his money, I hastened his departure like a wife; who, when she has made the most of a dying husband's breath, pulls away his pillow.

Man. Damn'd money! Its master's potent rival still; and, like a saucy pimp, corrupts it self the mistress it procures for us.

(*Aside.*)

Oliv. But I think with you, my life, to pass my time in talking. Come hither, come; yet stay till I have lock'd a door in the other room, that may chance to let us in some interruption; which reciting poets, or losing gamesters fear not more than I at this time do,

(*Exit. Olivia.*)

Fid. Well, I hope, you are now satisfy'd, sir, and will be gone, to think of your revenge?

Man. No, I am not satisfy'd, and must stay to be reveng'd.

Fid. How, sir? you'll use no violence to her, I hope, and forfeit your own life to take away her's? that were no revenge,

Man.

Man. No, no, you need not fear: my revenge shall only be upon her honour, not her life.

Fid. How, sir? her honour? O heavens! consider, sir, she has no honour. D'ye call that revenge? can you think of such a thing? but reflect, sir, how she hates and loaths you.

Man. Yes, so much she hates me, that it wou'd be a revenge sufficient to make her accessary to my pleasure, and then let her know it.

Fid. No, sir, no; to be reveng'd on her now, were to disappoint her. Pray, sir, let us be gone. (*Pulls Man.*)

Man. Hold off. What you are my rival then; and therefore you shall stay, and keep the door for me, whilst I go in for you: but, when I'm gone, if you dare to stir off from this very board, or breathe the least murmuring accent, I'll cut her throat first; and if you love her, you will not venture her life: nay, then I'll cut your throat too; and I know you love your own life at least.

Fid. But, sir; good sir.

Man. Not a word more, lest I begin my revenge on her by killing you.

Fid. But are you sure 'tis revenge that makes you do this? how can it be?

Man. Whist.

Fid. 'Tis a strange revenge, indeed.

Man. If you make me stay, I shall keep my word, and begin with you. No more.

(*Ex. Manly at the same door Olivia went. Manet Fid.*)

Fid. O heavens! is there not punishment enough
In loving well, if you will have't a crime;
But you must add fresh torments daily to't,
And punish us like peevish rivals still,
Because we fain wou'd find a heaven here?
But did there never any love like me,
That untry'd tortures you must find me out?
Others, at worst, you force to kill themselves;
But I must be self-murders of my love,
Yet will not grant me pow'r to end my life,

My cruel life; for when a lover's hopes
Are dead and gone, life is unmerciful.

(Sits down and weeps,

Enter Manly to her.

Man. I have thought better on't: I must not discover my self now I am without witnesses; for if I barely shou'd publish it, she wou'd deny it with as much impudence, as she wou'd act it again with this young fellow here. Where are you?

Fid. Here—— oh —— now I suppose we may be gone.

Man. I will; but not you: you must stay, and act the second part of a lover, that is, talk kindness to her.

Fid. Not I, sir.

Man. No disputing, sir, you must: 'tis necessary to my design of coming again to-morrow night.

Fid. What, can you come again then hither?

Man. Yes; and you must make the appointment, and an apology for your leaving her so soon; for I have said not a word to her, but have kept your counsel, as I expect you shou'd do mine. Do this faithfully, and I promise you here you shall run my fortune still, and we will never part as long as we live; but if you do not do it, expect not to live.

Fid. 'Tis hard, sir: but such a consideration will make it easier. You won't forget your promise, sir?

Man. No, by heavens. But I hear her coming.

(Exit.

Enter Olivia to Fidelia.

Oliv. Where is my life? run from me already! you do not love me, dearest; nay, you are angry with me, for you wou'd not so much as speak a kind word to me within: what was the reason?

Fid. I was transported too much.

Oliv. That's kind: but come, my soul, what makes you here? let us go in again; we may be surpriz'd in this room, 'tis so near the stairs.

Fid. No, we shall hear the better here, if any body shou'd come up.

Oliv. Nay, I assure you, we shall be secure enough within: come, come——

Fid.

Fid. I am sick, and troubled with a sudden dizziness; cannot stir yet.

Oliv. Come, I have spirits within.

Fid. O! ——— don't you hear a noise, madam?

Oliv. No, no; there is none: come, come.

(Pulls her.)

Fid. Indeed there is; and I love you so much, I must have a care of your honour, if you won't, and go; but to come to you to-morrow night, if you please.

Oliv. With all my soul: but you must not go yet; come, prithee.

Fid. Oh! ——— I'm now sicker, and am afraid of one of my fits.

Oliv. What fits?

Fid. Of the falling sickness; and I lie generally an hour in a trance: therefore pray consider your honour, for the sake of my love, and let me go, that I may return to you often.

Oliv. But will you be sure then to come to-morrow night?

Fid. Yes.

Oliv. Swear.

Fid. By our past kindness.

Oliv. Well, go your ways then, if you will, you naughty creature you.

(Exit Fidelia.)

These young lovers, with their fears and modesty, make themselves as bad as old ones to us; and I apprehend their bashfulness more than their tatling.

Fidelia returns.

Fid. O madam, we're undone! there was a gentleman upon the stairs, coming up with a candle, which made me retire. Look you here he comes.

Enter Vernish, and his man with a light.

Oliv. How! my husband! oh, undone indeed! this way.

(Exit.)

Ver. Ha! you shall not escape me so, sir.

(Stops Fidelia.)

Fid. O heavens! more fears, plagues, and torments yet in store!

(Aside.)

Ver.

Ver. Come, sir, I guess what your business was here; but this must be your business now. Draw. (*Draws.*)

Fid. Sir ———

Ver. No expostulations? I shall not care to hear of't. Draw.

Fid. Good sir.

Ver. How you rascal! not courage to draw; yet durst do me the greatest injury in the world? thy cowardice shall not save thy life. (*Offers to run at Fidelia.*)

Fid. O hold, sir, and send but your servant down, and I'll satisfy you, I cou'd not injure you as you imagine.

Ver. Leave the light, and be gone. (*Ex. Serv.*)
Now, quickly, sir, what have you to say, or ———

Fid. I am a woman, sir, a very unfortunate woman.

Ver. How! a very handsome woman I'm sure then: here are witnesses of't too, I contends ———

(*Pulls of her Peruke, and feels her breasts.*)

Well, I'm glad to find the tables turn'd; my wife is in more danger of cuckolding than I was. (*Aside.*)

Fid. Now, sir, I hope you are so much a man of honour, as to let me go; now I have satisfy'd you, sir.

Ver. When you have satisfy'd me, madam, I will.

Fid. I hope, sir, you are too much a gentleman, to urge those secrets from a woman, which concern her honour: you may guess my misfortune to be love by my disguise: but a pair of breeches cou'd not wrong you, sir.

Ver. I may believe love has chang'd your out-side, which cou'd not wrong me; but why did my wife run away?

Fid. I know not, sir; perhaps because she wou'd not be forc'd to discover me to you, or to guide me from your suspicions, that you might not discover me your self; which ungentleman-like curiosity I hope you will cease to have, and let me go.

Ver. Well, madam, if I must not know who you are, 'twill suffice for me only to know certainly what you are; which you must not deny me. Come, there is a bed within, the proper rack for lovers: and if you are a wo-

man,

man, there you can keep no secrets; you'll tell me there all unask'd. Come. *(Pulls her.)*

Fid. Oh! what d'ye mean? help, oh——

Ver. I'll shew you: but 'tis in vain to cry out: no one dares help you; for I am lord here.

Fid. Tyrant here: but if you are master of this house, which I have taken for a sanctuary, do not violate it your self.

Ver. No, I'll preserve you here, and nothing shall hurt you, and will be as true to you as your disguise; but you must trust me then. Come, come.

Fid. Oh! oh! rather than you shou'd drag me to a death so horrid and so shameful, I'll dye here a thousand deaths: but you do not look like a ravisher, sir.

Ver. Nor you like one wou'd put me to't; but if you will——

Fid. Oh! oh! help, help——

Enter Servant.

Ver. You saucy rascal, how durst you come in; when you heard a woman squeak, that shou'd have been your cue to shut the doot.

Serv. I come, sir, to let you know, the alderman coming home immediately after you were at his house, has sent his cashier with the money, according to your note.

Ver. Damn his money: money never came to any sure unseasonably till now. Bid him stay.

Serv. He says, he cannot a moment.

Ver. Receive it you then.

Serv. He says, he must have your receipt for it: he is in haste; for I hear him coming up, sir.

Ver. Damn him. Help me in here then with this dishonour of my family.

Fid. Oh! oh!

Serv. You say she is a woman, sir.

Ver. No matter, sir: must you prate?

Fid. Oh heavens! is there——

(They thrust her in, and lock the door.)

Ver.

Ver. Stay there, my prisoner; you have a short reprieve.

*I'll fetch the gold, and that she can't resist,
For with a full hand 'tis we ravish best.*

(*Exeunt.*)

ACT V. SCENE I.

Eliza's Lodgings.

Enter Olivia and Eliza.

Olivia.

AH, cousin, nothing troubles me, but that I have given the malicious world its revenge, and reason now to talk as freely of me, as I us'd to do of it.

Eliz. Faith, then let not that trouble you; for to be plain, cousin, the world cannot talk worse of you, than it did before.

Oliv. How, cousin? I'd have you to know, before this *faux pas*, this trip of mine, the world cou'd not talk of me.

Eliz. Only that you mind other people's actions so much, that you take no care of your own, but to hide 'em; that like a thief, because you know your self most guilty, you impeach your fellow-criminals first, to clear your self.

Oliv. O wicked world!

Eliz. That you pretend an aversion to all mankind in publick, only that their wives and mistresses may not be jealous, and hinder you of their conversation in private.

Oliv. Base world!

Eliz. That abroad, you fasten quarrels upon innocent men, for talking of you, only to bring 'em to ask your pardon at home, and to become dear friends with them, who were hardly your acquaintance before.

Oliv.

Oliv. Abominable world!

Eliz. That you condemn the obscenity of modern plays, only that you may not be censur'd for never missing the most obscene of the old ones.

Oliv. Damn'd world!

Eliz. That you deface the nudities of pictures, and little statues, only because they are not real.

Oliv. O, fie, fie, fie, hideous, hideous, cousin! the obscenity of their censures makes me blush.

Eliz. The truth of 'em, the naughty world wou'd say now.

Enter Lettice hastily.

Let. O, ma'am! here is that gentleman coming up, who now you say is my master.

Oliv. O, cousin! whither shall I run? protect me, or——

(Olivia runs away, and stands at a distance.

Enter Vernish.

Ver. Nay, nay, come——

Oliv. O, sir, forgive me.

Ver. Yes, yes, I can forgive you being alone in the dark with a woman in man's clothes; but have a care of a man in women's clothes.

Oliv. What does he mean? he dissembles only to get me into his power: or has my dear friend made him believe he was a woman? my husband may be deceiv'd by him, but I'm sure I was not. *(Aside.*

Ver. Come, come, you need not have lain out of your house for this; but perhaps you were afraid, when I was warm with suspicions, you must have discover'd who she was: and, prithee, may I not know it?

Oliv. She was—— *(I hope he has been deceiv'd: and since my lover has play'd the card, I must not renounce)* *(Aside.*

Ver. Come, what's the matter with thee? if I must not know who she is, I'm satisfied without. Come hither.

Oliv. Sure you do know her; she has told you her self, I suppose.

Ver. No, I might have known her better, but that I was interrupted by the goldsmith, you know, and was forc'd

forc'd to lock her into your chamber, to keep her from his sight; but when I return'd, I found she was got away, by tying the window-curtains to the balcony, by which she slid down into the street: for, you must know, I jested with her, and made her believe I'd ravish her; which she apprehended, it seems, in earnest.

Oliv. Then she got from you?

Ver. Yes.

Oliv. And is quite gone?

Ver. Yes.

Oliv. I'm glad on't——otherwise you had ravish'd her, sir? but how durst you go so far, as to make her believe you wou'd ravish her? let me understand that, sir. What, there's guilt in your face, you blush too: nay, then you did ravish her, you did, you base fellow. What, ravish a woman in the first month of our marriage! 'tis a double injury to me. thou base, ungrateful man; wrong my bed already, villain! I cou'd tear out those false eyes, barbarous unworth'y wretch.

Eliz. So, so! ——

Ver. Prithee hear, my dear.

Oliv. I will never hear you, my plague, my torment.

Ver. I swear——prithee hear me.

Oliv. I have heard already too many of your false oaths and vows, especially your last in the church. O wicked man! and wretched woman that I was! I wish I had then sunk down into a grave, rather than to have given you my hand, to be led to your loathsome bed. oh——oh——

(seems to weep.)

Ver. So, very fine! just a marriage-quarrel! which tho it generally begins by the wife's fault, yet, in the conclusion, it becomes the husband's; and whosoever offends at first, he only is sure to ask pardon at last. My dear——

Oliv. My devil——

Ver. Come, prithee be pleas'd, and go home; I have bespoken our supper betimes: for I cou'd not eat, till I found you. Go, I'll give you all kind of satisfactions; and one, which uses to be a reconciling one, two hundred of

H

those

those guineas I receiv'd last night, to do what you will with.

Oliv. What, wou'd you pay me for being your baud?

Ver. Nay, prithee no more; go, and I'll thoroughly satisfy you when I come home; and then, too, we will have a fit of laughter at *Manly*, whom I am going to find at the *Cock* in *Bow-street*, where I hear he din'd. Go, dearest, go home.

Eliz. A very pretty turn, indeed, this!

Ver. Now, cousin, since by my wife I have that honour and privilege of calling you so, I have something to beg of you too; which is, not to take notice of our marriage to any whatever, yet a while, for some reasons very important to me: and next, that you will do my wife the honour to go home with her; and me the favour, to use that power you have with her, in our reconciliation.

Eliz. That I dare promise, sir, will be no hard matter.

Your servant.

(*Exit Vernish.*)

Well, cousin, this I confess was reasonable hypocrisy; you were the better for't.

Oliv. What hypocrisy?

Eliz. Why, this last deceit of your husband was lawful, since in your own defence.

Oliv. What deceit? I'd have you to know, I never receiv'd my husband.

Eliz. You do not understand me, sure; I say, this was an honest come-off, and a good one: but 'twas a sign your gallant had had enough of your conversation, since he cou'd so dextrously cheat your husband in passing for a woman?

Oliv. What d'ye mean, once more, with my gallant, and passing for a woman?

Eliz. What do you mean? you see your husband took him for a woman?

Oliv. Whom?

Eliz. Hey day! why, the man he found you with, for whom last night you were so much afraid; and who you told me——

Oliv. Lord, you rave sure!

Eliz. Why, did not you tell me last night——

Oliv.

Oliv. I know not what I might tell you last night, in a fright.

Eliz. Ay, what was that fright for? for a woman? besides, were you not afraid to see your husband just now? I warrant, only for having been found with a woman! nay, did not you just now too own your false step, or trip, as you call'd it? which was with a woman too! fie, this fooling is so insipid, 'tis offensive.

Oliv. And fooling with my honour will be more offensive. Did you not hear my husband say, he found me with a woman in man's cloaths? and d'ye think he does not know a man from a woman?

Eliz. Not so well, I'm sure, as you do? therefore I'd rather take your word.

Oliv. What, you grow scurrilous, and are I find more censorious than the world! I must have a care of you, I see,

Eliz. No, you need not fear yet, I'll keep your secret.

Oliv. My secret! I'd have you to know, I have no need of confidants, tho you value your self upon being a good one.

Eliz. O admirable confidence! you shew more in denying your wickedness, than other people in glorying in't.

Oliv. Confidence, to me! to me such language! nay, then I'll never see your face again. I'll quarrel with her, that people may never believe I was in her power; but take for malice all the truth she may speak against me. (*Aside*) Lettice, where are you? let us be gone from this censorious ill woman.

Eliz. Nay, thou shalt stay a little, to damn thy self quite. (*Aside.*)

One word first, pray, madam; can you swear that whom your husband found you with——

Oliv. Swear! ay, that whosoever 'twas that stole up, unknown, into my room, when 'twas dark, I know not whether man or woman, by heavens, by all that's good; or, may I never more have joys here, or in the other world; nay, may I eternally——

Eliz. Be damn'd. So, so, you are damn'd enough already by your oaths; and I enough confirm'd, and now you may please to be gone. Yet take this advice with you, in this plain dealing age, to leave off forswearing your self; for when people hardly think the better of a woman for her real modesty, why shou'd you put that great constraint upon your self to feign it?

Oliv. O hideous! hideous advice! let us go out of the hearing of it. She will spoil us, *Lettice*.

(*Ex. Oliv. and Let. at one door, Eliz. at t'other.*)

The scene changes to the Cock in Bow-street a table and bottles.

Manly and Fidelia.

Man. How! sav'd her honour, by making her husband believe you were a woman! 'twas well, but hard enough to do, sure.

Fid. We were interrupted before he cou'd contradict me.

Man. But can't you tell me, d'ye say, what kind of man he was?

Fid. I was so frightned, I confess, I can give no other account of him, but that he was pretty tall, round fac'd, and one, I'm sure, I ne'er had seen before.

Man. But she, you say, made you swear to return to night?

Fid. But I have since sworn, never to go near her again; for the husband wou'd murder me, or worse, if he caught me again.

Man. No, I will go with you, and defend you to night, and then I'll swear too, never to go near her again.

Fid. Nay, indeed, sir, I will not go, to be accessary to your death too: besides, what shou'd you go again sir, for?

Man. No disputing, or advice, sir, you have reason to know I am unalterable. Go, therefore presently, and write her a note, to enquire if her assignation with you holds; and if not to be at her own house, where else. And be importunate to gain admittance to her to night:

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let your messenger, e'er he deliver your letter, enquire first, if her husband be gone out. Go, 'tis now almost six of the clock; I expect you back here before seven, with leave to see her then. Go, do this dextrously, and expect the performance of my last night's promise, never to part with you.

Fid. Ay, sir; but will you be sure to remember that?

Man. Did I ever break my word? go, no more replies, or doubts. (Exit *Fidelia*.)

Enter Freeman to Manly.

Where hast thou been?

Free. In the next room, with my lord *Plausible* and *Novel*.

Man. Ay, we came hither, because 'twas a private house; but with thee indeed no house can be private, for thou hast that pretty quality of the familiar fops of the town, who, in an eating-house, always keep company with all people in't, but those they came with.

Free. I went into their room, but to keep them, and my own fool the squire, out of your room; but you shall be peevish now, because you have no money: but why the devil won't you write to those we were speaking of? since your modesty, or your spirit, will not suffer you to speak to 'em, to lend you money, why won't you try 'em at last that way?

Man. Because I know 'em already, and can bear want better than denials, nay, than obligations.

Free. Deny you! they cannot: all of 'em have been your intimate friends.

Man. No, they have been people only I have oblig'd particularly.

Free. Very well; therefore you ought to go to 'em the rather, sure.

Man. No, no: those you have oblig'd most, must certainly avoid you, when you can oblige 'em no longer; and they take your visits like so many duns: friends, like mistresses, are avoided for obligations past.

Free. Pshaw! but most of 'em are your relations; men of great fortune and honour.

Man.

Man. Yes; but relations have so much honour, as to think poverty taints the blood; and disown their wanting kindred; believing, I suppose, that, as riches at first makes a gentleman, the want of 'em degrades him. But damn 'em, now I am poor, I'll anticipate their contempt, and disown them.

Free. But you have many a female acquaintance, whom you have been liberal to, who may have a heart to refund to you a little, if you wou'd ask it: they are not all *Olivia's*.

Man. Damn thee! how cou'dst thou think of such a thing? I wou'd as soon rob my footman of his wages: besides, 'twere in vain too: for a wench is like a box in an ordinary, receives all peoples money easily, but there's no getting, nay, shaking any out again; and he that fills it, is sure never to keep the key.

Free. Well, but noble captain, wou'd you make me believe that you, who know half the town, have so many friends, and have oblig'd so many, can't borrow fifty or an hundred pounds.

Man. Why, noble lieutenant, you who know all the town, and call all you know, friends, methinks shou'd not wonder at it; since you find ingratitude too; for how many lords families (tho descended from black-smiths, or tinkers) hast thou call'd great and illustrious? how many ill tables call'd good eating? how many noisy coxcombs, wits? how many pert coaching cowards, stout? how many taudry affected rogues, well dress'd? how many perukes admir'd? and how many ill verses applauded? and yet canst not borrow a shilling? dost thou expect I, who always spoke truth, shou'd?

Free. Nay, now you think you have paid me; but hark you, captain, I have heard of a thing call'd grinning honour, but never of starving honour.

Man. Well, but it has been the fate of some brave men: and if they won't give me a ship again, I can go starve any where with a musket on my shoulder.

Free. Give you a ship! why, you will not solicit it?

Man. If I have not solicited it by my services, I know no other way.

Free.

The Plain Dealer.

105

Free. Your servant, sir ; nay, then I'm satisfied, I must solicit my widow the closer, and run the desperate fortune of matrimony on shore. (*Exit.*

Enter to Manly, vernish.

Man. How! ——— nay, here is a friend indeed ; and he that has him in his arms, can know no wants.

(*Embraces Vernish.*

Ver. Dear sir ! and he that is in your arms, is secure from all fears whatever ; nay, our nation is secure by your defeat at sea, and the *Dutch* that fought against you, have prov'd enemies to themselves only, in bringing you back to us,

Man. Fie, fie ; this from a friend ? and yet from any other 'twere unsufferable : I thought I shou'd never have taken any thing ill from you.

Ver. A friend's privilege is to speak his mind, tho it be taken ill.

Man. But your tongue need not tell me you think too well of me ; I have found it from your heart, which spoke in actions, your unalterable heart : but *Olivia* is false, my friend, which I suppose is no news to you.

Ver. He's in the right on't. (*Aside.*

Man. But cou'dst thou not keep her true to me ?

Ver. Not from my heart, sir.

Man. But cou'd you not perceive it at all before I went ? cou'd she so deceive us both ?

Ver. I must confess, the first time I knew it, was three days after your departure, when she receiv'd the money you had left in *Lombard Street* in her name ; and her tears did not hinder her it seems from counting that. You wou'd trust her with all, like a true generous lover.

Man. And she like a mean jilting ———

Ver. Traiterous ———

Man. Base ———

Ver. Damn'd ———

Man. Covetous ———

Ver. Mercenary whore ———

I can hardly hold from laughing.

(*Aside.*

Man. Ay, a mercenary whore indeed ; for she made me pay her before I lay with her.

Ver.

Ver. How! — why, have you lain with her?

Man. Ay, ay.

Ver. Nay, she deserves you shou'd report it at least, tho you have not.

Man. Report it! by heav'n, 'tis true,

Ver. How! sure not.

Man. I do not use to lye, nor you to doubt me.

Ver. When?

Man. Last night, about seven or eight of the clock.

Ver. Ha! — now I remember, I thought she spake as if she expected some other, rather than me: a confounded whore indeed! (*Aside.*)

Man. But what, thou wonder'st at it! nay, you seem to be angry too.

Ver. I cannot but be enrag'd against her, for her usage of you: damn'd, infamous, common jade.

Man. Nay, her cuckold, who first cuckolded me in my money, shall not laugh all himself: we will do him reason, shan't we?

Ver. Ay, ay.

Man. But thou dost not, for so great a friend, take pleasure enough in your friend's revenge, methinks.

Ver. Yes, yes; I'm glad to know it, since you have lain with her.

Man. Thou canst not tell me who that rascal, her cuckold, is?

Ver. No.

Man. She wou'd keep it from you, I suppose.

Ver. Yes, yes —

Man. Thou wou'd'st laugh, if thou knewest but all the circumstances of my having her. Come, I'll tell thee.

Ver. Damn her: I care not to hear any more of her.

Man. Faith thou shalt. You must know —

Enter Freeman backwards, endeavouring to keep out Novel, Lord Plausible, Jerry, and Oldfox, who all press upon him.

Free. I tell you, he has a wench with him, and wou'd be private.

Man. Damn 'em! a man can't open a bottle in these eating-houses, but presently you have these impudent, intrud-

intruding, buzzing flies and insects in your glass——
well, I'll tell thee all an on. In the mean time, prithee go
to her; but not from me, and try if you can get her to
lend me but an hundred pound of my money, to supply
my present wants; for I suppose there is no recovering
any of it by law.

Ver. Not any: think not of it. Nor by this way nei-
ther.

Man. Go try, at least.

Ver. I'll go; but I can satisfy you beforehand, it will
be to no purpose: you'll no more find a refunding
wench——

Man. Than a refunding lawyer; indeed their fee's
alike, scarce ever return: however, try her; put it to
her.

Ver. Ay, ay, I'll try her; put it to her home, with a
vengeance. (*Exit Vernish.*)

Manent ceteri.

Nov. Nay, you shall be our judge, *Manly*. Come,
major, I'll speak to your teeth: if people provoke me to
say bitter things to their faces, they must take what fol-
lows; tho', like my lord *Plausible*, I'd rather do't civilly
behind their backs.

Man. Nay, thou art a dangerous rogue, I've heard,
behind a man's back.

Ld Plaus. You wrong him sure, noble captain: he
wou'd do a man no more harm behind his back, than to
his face.

Free. I am of my lord's mind.

Man. Yes, a fool, like a coward, is the more to be
fear'd behind a man's back, more than a witty man; for,
as a coward is more bloody than a brave man, a fool is
more malicious than a man of wit.

Nov. A fool, tar——a fool! nay, thou art a brave
sea-judge of wit! a fool! prithee when did you ever
find me want something to say, as you do often?

Man. Nay, I confess, thou art always talking, roar-
ing, or making a noise, that I'll say for thee.

Nov. Well, and is talking a sign of a fool?

Man. Yes, always talking, especially too if it be
loud and fast, is the sign of a fool. *Nov*

Nov. Pshaw! talking is like fencing, the quicker the better; run 'em down, run 'em down, no matter for parting; push on still, fa, fa, fa: no matter whether you argue in form, push in guard or no.

Man. Or hit or no; I think thou always talk'st without thinking, *Novel.*

Nov. Ay, ay; study'd play's the worse, to follow the allegory, as the old pedant says.

Old. A young fop!

Man. I ever thought the man of most wit had been like him of most money, who has no vanity in shewing it every where; whilst the beggarly pusher of his fortune, has all he has about him still only to shew.

Nov. Well, sir, and make a very pretty shew in the world, let me tell you; nay, a better than your close hunks: a pox, give me ready money in play? what care I for a man's reputation? what are we the better for your substantial thrifty curmudgeon in wit, sir?

Old. Thou art a profuse young rogue indeed.

Nov. So much for talking, which, I think, I have prov'd a mark of wit; and so is railing, roaring, and making a noise: for railing is satire, you know; and roaring and making a noise humour.

Enter to them Fidelity, taking Manly aside, and showing him a paper.

Fid. The hour is between seven and eight exactly: 'tis now half an hour after six.

Man. Well, go then to the piazza, and wait for me: as soon as it is quite dark, I'll be with you. I must stay here yet a while for my friend. But is railing satire, *Novel?*

(Exit Fidelity.)

Free. And roaring and making a noise, humour?

Nov. What won't you confess there's humour in roaring and making a noise.

Free. No.

Nov. Nor in cutting napkins and hangings?

Man. No sure.

Nov. Dull fops!

Old. O rogue, rogue, insipid rogue! nay, gentlemen, allow him those things for wit; for his parts lie only that way.

Nov. Peace, old fool, I wonder not at thee; but that young fellows shou'd be so dull, as to say there's no humour in making a noise, and breaking windows! I tell you there's wit and humour too in both; and a wit as well known by his frolick as by his smile.

Old. Pure rogue! there's your modern wit for you! wit and humour in breaking of windows! there's mischief, if you will; but no wit or humour.

Nov. Prithee, prithee peace, old fool; I tell you, where there's mischief, there's wit. Don't we esteem the monkey a wit amongst beasts, only because he's mischievous? and let me tell you, as good nature is a sign of a fool, being mischievous is a sign of a wit.

Old. O rogue, rogue! pretend to be a wit, by doing mischief and railing.

Nov. Why, thou, old fool, hast no other pretence to the name of wit, but by railing at new plays?

Old. Thou by railing at that facetious noble way of wit, quibbling.

Nov. Thou call'st thy dulness, gravity; and thy dozing, thinking.

Old. You, sir, your dulness, spleen; and you talk much, and say nothing.

Nov. Thou read'st much, and understand'st nothing, sir.

Old. You laugh loud, and break no jest.

Nov. You rail, and no body hangs himself; and thou hast nothing of the satire but in thy face.

Old. And you have no jest, but your face, sir.

Nov. Thou art an illiterate pedant.

Old. Thou art a fool with a bad memory.

Man. Come, a pox on you both, you have done like wits now; for you wits, when you quarrel, never give over till ye prove one another fools.

Nov. And you fools have never any occasion of laughing at us wits, but when we quarrel: Therefore let us be friends, *Oldfox.*

Man.

Man. They are such wits as thou art, who make the name of a wit as scandalous as that of bully; and signify a loud-laughing, talking, incorrigible coxcomb, as bully a roaring hardned coward.

Free. And wou'd have his noise and laughter pass for wit, as t'other his huffing and blustering for courage.

Enter Vernish.

Man. Gentlemen, with your leave, here is one I wou'd speak with; and I have nothing to say to you.

(Puts 'em out of the room.)

Manent Manly, Vernish.

Ver. I told you 'twas in vain to think of getting money out of her: she says, if a shilling wou'd do't, she wou'd not save you from starving or hanging, or what you wou'd think worse, begging or flattering; and rails so at you, one wou'd not think you had lain with her.

Man. O, friend, never trust for that matter a woman's railing; for she is no less a dissembler in her hatred than her love: and as her fondness of her husband is a sign he's a cuckold, her railing at another man is a sign she lies with him.

Ver. He's in the right on't: I know not what to trust to. *(Aside.)*

Man. But you did not take any notice of it to her, I hope?

Ver. So! ——— sure he is afraid I shou'd have disproved him by an enquiry of her: all may be well yer.

(Aside.)

Man. What hast thou in thy head, that makes thee seem to unquiet?

Ver. Only this base impudent woman's falseness: I cannot put her out of my head.

Man. O, my dear friend, be not you too sensible of my wrongs; for then I shall feel 'em too with more pain, and think them unsufferable. Damn her, her money, and that illnatur'd whore too, fortune her self: but if thou wouldst ease a little my present trouble, prithee go borrow me somewhere else some money I can trouble thee.

Ver.

The Plain Dealer.

III

Ver. You trouble me, indeed, most sensibly, when you command me any thing I cannot do : I have lately lost a great deal of money at play, more than I can yet pay ; so that not only my money but my credit too is gone, and know not where to borrow ; but cou'd rob a church for you. (Yet wou'd rather end your wants by cutting your throat.) (*Aside.*)

Man. Nay, then I doubly feel my poverty, since I'm incapable of supplying thee.

(*Embraces Vernish.*)

Ver. But, methinks, she that granted you the last favour, (as they call it) shou'd not deny you any thing---

Nov. Hey, tarpaulin have you done ?

(*Novel looks in, and retires again.*)

Ver. I understand not that point of kindness, I confess.

Man. No, thou dost not understand it, and I have not time to let you know all now ; for these fools, you see, will interrupt us : but anon, at supper, we'll laugh at leisure together at *Olivia's* cuckold, who took a young fellow, that goes between his wife and me, for a woman.

Ver. Ha !

Man. Senseless easy rascal ! 'twas no wonder she chose him for a husband ; but she thought him, I thank her, fitter than me, for that blind bearing office.

Ver. I cou'd not be deceiv'd in that long woman's hair ty'd up behind, nor those infallible proofs, her pouting swelling breasts : I handled too many sure not to know 'em. (*Aside.*)

Man. What, you wonder the fellow cou'd be such a blind coxcomb ?

Ver. Yes, yes——

Nov. Nay, prithee come to us, *Manly* ; gad, all the fine things one says in their company, are lost without thee. (*Novel looks in again, and retires.*)

Man. Away, fop, I'm busy yet.

You see we cannot talk here at our ease ; besides, I must be gone immediately, in order to meeting with *Olivia* again to night.

Ver.

Ver. To night! it cannot be sure ——

Man. I had an appointment just now from her.

Ver. For what time?

Man. At half an hour after seven precisely.

Ver. Don't you apprehend the husband?

Man. He! snivelling gull! he a thing to be fear'd!
a husband! the tameſt of creatures!

Ver. Very fine!

(*Aside.*)

Man. But, prithee, in the mean time, go try to get me ſome money. Tho thou art too modeſt to borrow for thy ſelf, thou canſt do any thing for me, I know. Go; for I muſt be gone to *Olivia*: go, and meet me here anon —— *Freeman*, where are you? (Exit *Manly*.)

Manet Verniſh.

Ver. Ay, I'll meet with you, I warrant; but it ſhall be at *Olivia*'s. Sure it cannot be: ſhe denies it ſo calmly, and with that honeſt modeſt aſſurance, it cannot be true —— and he does not uſe to lye —— but belying a woman, when ſhe won't be kind, is the only lye a brave man will leaſt ſcruple. But then the woman in man's clothes, whom he call's a man —— well, but by her breaſts, I know her to be a woman: —— but then again, his appointment from her, to meet with him to night! I am diſtracted more with doubt than jealousy. Well, I have no way to diſabuſe or revenge my ſelf, but by going home immediately, putting on a riding-ſuit, and pretending to my wife, the ſame buſineſs which carried me out of town laſt, requires me again to go poſt to *Oxford* to night. Then if the appointment he boaſts of be true, it's ſure to hold, and I ſhall have an opportunity either of clearing her, or revenging my ſelf on both. Perhaps ſhe is his wench, of an old date, and I am his cully, whiſt I think him mine; and he has ſeem'd to make his wench rich, only that I might take her off his hands: or if he has but lately lain with her, he muſt needs diſcover by her my treachery to him; which I'm ſure he will revenge with my death, and which I muſt prevent with his, if it were only but for fear of his too juſt reproaches; for I muſt confeſs, I never had till now any excuſe but that of intereſt, for doing ill to him.

Exit Verniſh.

Re-

Re-enter Manly and Freeman.

Man. Come hither; only, I say, be sure you mistake not the time: you know the house exactly where *Olivia* lodges; 'tis just hard by.

Free. Yes, yes.

Man. Well then, bring 'em all, I say, thither, and all you know that may be then in the house; for the more witnesses I have of her infamy, the greater will be my revenge: and be sure you come strait up to her chamber, without more a-do. Here, take the watch, you see 'tis above a quarter past seven; be there in half an hour exactly.

Free. You need not doubt my diligence or dexterity: I am an old scourer and can naturally beat up a wench's quarters that won't be civil. Shan't we break her windows too?

Man. No, no; be punctual only. *(Exeunt ambo. Enter Widow Blackacre, and two knights of the post, a waiter with wine.)*

Wid. Sweet-heart, are you sure the door was shut close, that none of those roysters saw us come?

Wait. Yes, mistress; and you shall have a privater room above, instantly. *(Exit Waiter.)*

Wid. You are safe enough, gentlemen; for I have been private in this house before now, upon other occasions, when I was something younger. Come, gentlemen, in short, I leave my business to your care and fidelity: and so, here's to you.

1 Knight. We are ungrateful rogues, if we shou'd not be honest to you; for we have had a great deal of your money.

Wid. And you have done me many a good job for't: and so, here's to you again.

2 Knight. Why, we have been perjur'd but six times for you.

1 Knight. Forg'd but four deeds, with your husband's last deed of gift.

2 Knight. And but three wills.

1 Knight. And counterfeited hands and seals to some six bonds: I think that's all, brother?

Wid.

Wid. Ay, that's all, gentlemen : and so, here's to you again.

2. *Knight.* Nay, 'twou'd do one's heart good to be forsworn for you : you have a conscience in your ways, and pay us well.

1 *Knight.* You are in the right on't, brother ; one wou'd be damn'd for her with all one's heart.

2 *Knight.* But there are rogues who make us forsworn for 'em ; and when we come to be paid, they'll be forsworn too, and not pay us our wages, which they promis'd with oaths sufficient.

1 *Knight.* Ay, a great lawyer, that shall be nameless, bilk'd me too.

Wid. That was hard, methinks, that a lawyer shou'd use gentlemen witnesses no better.

2 *Knight.* A lawyer ! d'ye wonder a lawyer shou'd do't ? I was bilk'd by a reverend divine, that preaches twice on sundays, and prays half an hour still before dinner.

Wid. How ! a conscientious divine, and not pay people for damning themselves ! sure then, for all his talking, he does not believe damnation. But come, to our business : pray be sure to imitate exactly the flourish at the end of this name. *(Pulls out a deed or two,*

1 *Knight.* O, he's the best in *England*, at untangling a flourish, madam.

Wid. And let not the seal be a jot bigger : observe well the dash too, at the end of this name.

2 *Knight.* I warrant you, madam.

Wid. Well, these and many other shifts, poor widows are put to sometimes ; for every body wou'd be riding a widow, as they say, and breaking into her jointure : they think marrying a widow an easy business, like leaping the hedge, where another has gone over before : a widow is a mere gap, a gap with them.

Enter to them Major Oldfox, with two Waiters.

(The Knights of the post huddle up the writings.

What, he here ! go then, go, my hearts, you have your instructions. *(Ex. Knights of the post.*

The Plain Dealer.

115

Old. Come, madam, to be plain with you, I'll be fob'd off no longer. I'll bind her and gag her, but she shall hear me.

(*Aside.*

Look you, friends, there's the money I promis'd you; and now do you what you promis'd me: here are my garters, and here's a gag. You shall be acquainted with my parts, lady, you shall.

Wid. Acquainted with your parts! a rape, a rape ——— what, will you ravish me?

(*The Waiters tie her to the chair, and gag her; and exeunt.*

Old. Yes, lady, I will ravish you; but it shall be through the ear, lady, the ear only, with my well penn'd acrosticks.

Enter to them Freeman, Jerry Blackacre, three Bailiffs, a Constable and his assistants, with the two Knights of the post.
What, shall I never read my things undisturb'd again?

Jerr. O law! my mother bound hand and foot, and gaping as if she rose before her time to day.

Free. What means this, *Oldfox*? but I'll release you from him; you shall be no man's prisoner but mine. Bailiffs, execute your writ.

(*Freeman unties her.*

Old. Nay, then I'll be gone, for fear of being bail, and paying her debts without being her husband. (*Ex. Old.*

1 Bail. We arrest you in the king's name, at the suit of *Mr. Freeman*, guardian to *Jeremiah Blackacre esq;* in an action of ten thousand pounds.

Wid. How! how! in a choke-bail action! what, and the pen-and-ink gentlemen taken too! have you confessed, you rogues?

1 Knight. We needed not to confess; for the bailiffs have dog'd us hither to the very door, and over-heard all that you and we said.

Wid. Undone, undone then! no man was ever too hard for me till now, O *Jerry*, child, wilt thou vex again the womb that bore thee?

Jerr. Ay, for bearing me before wedlock, as you say: but I'll teach you to call a *Blackacre* bastard, tho you were never so much my mother.

I

Wid.

Wid. Well, I'm undone! not one trick left? no law-meush imaginable? (Aside.

Cruel fir, a word with you, I pray.

Free. In vain, madam; for you have no other way to release your self but by the bonds of matrimony.

Wid. How, fir, how! that were but to sue out an *Habeas Corpus*, for a removal from one prison to another. Matrimony!

Free. Well, bailiffs, away with her.

Wid. O stay, fir, can you be so cruel as to bring me under covert-baron again, and put it out of my power to sue in my own name? matrimony to a woman is worse than excommunication, in depriving her of the benefit of the law: and I wou'd rather be depriv'd of life. But hark you, fir, I am contented you shou'd hold and enjoy my person by lease or patent, but not by the spiritual patent, call'd a licence; that is, to have the privileges of a husband, without the dominion; that is, *Durante bene placito*: in consideration of which, I will out of my jointure, secure you an annuity of three hundred pounds a year, and pay your debts; and that's all you younger brothers desire to marry a widow for, I'm sure.

Free. Well, widow, if——

Jerr. What, I hope, bully guardian, you are not making agreements without me?

Free. No, no. First, widow, you must say no more that he is a son of a whore; have a care of that: and then he must have a settled exhibition of forty pounds a year, and a nag of assizes, kept by you, but not upon the common; and have free ingress, egress and regress, to and from your maid's garrer.

Wid. Well, I can grant all that too.

Jerr. Ay, ay, fair words butter no cabbage: but guardian, make her sign, sign and seal; for other wise, if you knew her as well as I, you wou'd not trust her word for a farthing.

Free. I warrant thee, squire. Well, widow, since thou art so generous, I will be generous too; and if you'll secure me four hundred pounds a year, but during your life,

life, and pay my debts, not above a thousand pounds ; I'll bate you your person, to dispose of as you please.

Wid. Have a care, sir, a settlement without a consideration, is void in law : you must do something for't.

Free. Prithee, then let the settlement on me be call'd alimony ; and the consideration, our separation : come, my lawyer, with writings ready drawn, is within, and in haste : come.

Wid. But, what, no other kind of consideration, Mr. Freeman ? well, a widow, I see, is a kind of *sine cure*, by custom of which the unconscionable incumbent enjoys the profits, without any duty, but does that still elsewhere.

(*Ex. Omnes.*)

The Scene changes to Olivia's Lodging.

Enter Olivia with a candle in her hand.

Oliv. So, I am now prepared once more for my timeous young lover's reception : my husband is gone ; and go thou out too, thou next interrupter of love——(*Puts out the candle.*) kind darkness that frees us lovers from scandal and bashfulness, from the censure of our gallants and the world——so, are you there ?

Enter to Olivia, Fidelia, follow'd softly by Manly.

Come, my dear punctual lover, there is not such another in the world ; thou hast beauty and youth to please a wife ; address and wit, to amuse and tool a husband ; nay, thou hast all things to be wish'd in a lover, but your fits : I hope, my dear, you won't have one to night ; and that you may not, I'll lock the door, tho there be no need of it, but to lock out your fits ; for my husband is just gone out of town again. Come, where are you ?

(*Goes to the door, and locks it.*)

Man. Well thou hast impudence enough to give me fits too, and make revenge it self impotent, hinder me from making thee yet more infamous, if it can be. (*Aside.*)

Oliv. Come, come, my soul, come.

Fid. Presently, my dear, we have time enough sure.

Oliv. How ! time enough ! true lovers can no more think they ever have time enough, than love enough :
you

you shall stay with me all night ; but that is but a lover's moment. Come.

Fid. But won't you let me give you and my self the satisfaction of telling you how I abus'd your husband last night ?

Oliv. Not when you can give me, and your self too, the satisfaction of abusing him again to night. Come.

Fid. Let me but tell you how your husband ———

Oliv. O, name not his, or *Manly's* more loathsome name, if you love me ; I forbid 'em last night : and you know I mention'd my husband but once, and he came. No talking, pray, 'twas ominous to us. You make me fancy a noise at the door already, but I'm resolv'd not to be interrupted. (*A noise at the door.*) where are you ? come, for, rather than lose my dear expectation now, tho my husband were at the door, and the bloody ruffian *Manly* here in the room, with all his awful insolence, I wou'd give my self to this dear hand, to be led away to heavens of joys, which none but thou canst give. But what's this noise at the door ? so, I told you what talking wou'd come to. (*The noise at the door increases.*) ha ! — O heavens my husband's voice ! ——— (*Olivia listens at the door.*)

Man. *Freeman* is come too soon.

(*Aside.*)

Oliv. O, 'tis he ! ——— then here's the happiest minute lost, that ever bashful boy, or trifling woman fool'd away ! I'm undone ! my husband's reconciliation too was false, as my joy, all delusion : but come this way, here's a back-door.

(*Exit, and returns.*)

The officious jade has lock'd us in, instead of locking others out ; but let us then escape your way, by the balcony ; and whilst you pull down the curtains, I'll fetch from my closet, what next will best secure our escape : I have left my key in the door, and 'twill not suddenly be broken open.

(*Exit.*)

(*A noise as it were people forcing the door.*)

Man. Stir not, yet fearing nothing.

Fid. Nothing but your life, sir.

Man. We shall know this happy man she calls husband.

(*Olivia re-enters.*)

Oliv.

Oliv. Oh, where are you? what, idle with fear? come, I'll tie the curtains, if you will hold. Here, take this cabinet and purse, for it is thine, if we escape;

(Manly takes from her the cabinet and purse.
therefore let us make haste. (Ex. Oliv.

Man. 'Tis mine indeed now again, and it shall never escape more from me, to you, at least.

(The door broke open, enter Vernish alone, with a dark lanthorn and a sword, running at Manly, who draws, puts by the thrust, and defends himself, whilst Fdelia runs at Vernish behind.

Ver. So, there I'm right sure—— (With a low voice.

Man. softly. Sword and dark lanthorn, villain, are some odds; but——

Ver. Odds! I'm sure I find more odds than I expected: what, has my insatiable two seconds at once? but——

(With a low voice. Whilst they fight, Olivia re-enters, tying two curtains together.

Oliv. Where are you now?—what, is he entred then, and are they fighting? O do not kill one that can make no defence. (Manly throws Vernish down, and disarms him.) how! but I think he has the better on't: here's his scarf, 'tis he. So, keep him down still: I hope thou hast no hurt, my dearest? (Embracing Manly.

Enter to them Freeman, Lord Plausible, Novel, Jerry Blackacre, and the Widow Blackacre, lighted by the two sailors with torches.

Ha! ——— what? Manly! and have I been thus concern'd for him! embracing him! and has he his jewels again too! what means this? O, 'tis too sure, as well as my shame! which I'll go hide for ever.

(Offers to go out, and Manly stops her.

Man. No, my dearest, after so much kindness as has past between us, I cannot part with you yet. Freeman, let no body stir out of the room; for notwithstanding your lights, we are yet in the dark, till this gentleman please to turn his face—— (Pulls Vernish by the sleeve.
How! Vernish! art thou the happy man then? thou! thou! speak, I say; but thy guilty silence tells me all— well, I shall not upbraid thee; for my wonder is striking
me

me as dumb, as thy shame has made thee. But what? my little volunteer hurt, and fainting!

Fid. My wound, fir, is but a slight one in my arm; 'tis only my fear of your danger, fir, not yet well over.

Man. But what's here? more strange things!

(*Observing Fidelity's hair untied behind, and without a peruke, which she lost in the scuffle.*)

What means this long woman's hair, and face! now all of it appears too beautiful for a man; which I still thought womanish indeed! what, you have not deceiv'd me too, my little volunteer?

Oliv. Me she has, I'm sure.

(*Aside.*)

Man. Speak.

Enter Eliza and Lettice.

Eliz. What, cousin, I am brought hither by your woman, I suppose, to be a witness of the second vindication of your honour?

Oliv. Insulting is not generous: you might spare me, I have you.

Eliz. Have a care, cousin, you'll confess anon too much; and I wou'd not have your secrets.

Man. Come, your blushes answer me sufficiently, and you have been my volunteer in love. (To Fidelity.)

Fid. I must confess, I needed no compulsion to follow you all the world over; which I attempted in this habit, partly out of shame to own my love to you, and fear of a greater shame, your refusal of it: for I knew of your engagement to this lady, and the constancy of your nature; which nothing cou'd have alter'd, but her self.

Man. Dear madam, I desir'd you to bring me out of confusion, and you have given me more: I know not what to speak to you, or how to look upon you; the sense of my rough, hard, and ill usage of you, (tho chiefly your own fault) gives me more pain now 'tis over, than you had, when you suffer'd it: and if my heart, the refusal of such a woman, (*pointing to Olivia*) were not a sacrifice to profane your love, and a greater wrong to you than ever yet I did you; I wou'd beg of you to receive it, tho you us'd it, as she had done; for tho it deserv'd not from her the treatment she gave it, it does from you.

Fid.

Fid. Then it has had punishment sufficient for her already, and needs no more from me: and, I must confess, I wou'd not be the only cause of making you break your last night's oath to me, of never parting with me; if you do not forget, repent it.

Man. Then take for ever my heart, and this with it; (*gives her the cabinet.*) for 'twas given to you before, and my heart was before your due: I only beg leave to dispose of these few—here, madam, I never yet left my wench unpaid.

(*Takes some of the jewels, and offers 'em to Olivia; she strikes 'em down: Plausible and Novel take 'em up.*)

Oliv. So it seems, by giving her the cabinet.

Ld Plaus. These pendants appertain to your most faithful humble servant.

Nov. And this locket is mine; my earnest for love, which she never paid: therefore my own again.

Wid. By what law, sir, pray? cousin *Olivia*, a word: what do they make a seizure on your goods and chattles, *vi & armis*? make your demand, I say, and bring your trover, bring your trover. I'll follow the law for you.

Oliv. And I my revenge.

(*Exit Olivia.*)

Man. to *Ver.*) But 'tis, my friend, in your consideration most, that I would have return'd part of your wife's portion; for 'twere hard to take all from thee, since thou hast paid so dear for't, in being such a rascal: yet thy wife is a fortune without a portion; and thou art a man of that extraordinary merit in villany, the world and fortune can never desert thee, tho I do; therefore be not melancholy. Fare you well, sir. (*Ex. Vernish doggedly.*) Now, madam, I beg your pardon, (*turning to Fidelia.*) for lessening the present I made you; but my heart can never be lessen'd: this, I confess, was too small for you before; for you deserve the *Indian* world; and I would now go thither, out of covetousness for your sake only.

Fid. Your heart, sir, is a present of that value, I can never make any return to't: (*pulling Manly from the company.*) But I can give you back such a present as this, which I got by the loss of my father, a gentleman of the north, of no mean extraction, whose only child I was, there

therefore left me in the present possession of two thousand pounds a year, which I left with multitudes of pretenders, to follow you, sir; having in several publick places seen you, and observ'd your actions throughly, with admiration, when you were too much in love to take notice of mine; which yet was but too visible. The name of my family is *Grey*, my other *Fidelia*: the rest of my story you shall know when I have fewer auditors.

Man. Nay, now, madam, you have taken from me all power of making you any compliment on my part; for I was going to tell you, that for your sake only, I wou'd quit the unknown pleasure of a retirement; and rather stay in this ill world of ours still, tho' odious to me, than give you more frights again at sea, and make again too great a venture there, in you alone. But if I shou'd tell you now all this, and that your virtue (since greater than I thought any was in the world) had now reconcil'd me to't, my friend here wou'd say, 'tis your estate that has made me friends with the world.

Free. I must confess, I shou'd; for I think most of our quarrels to the world, are just such as we have to a handsome woman; only because we cannot enjoy her as we wou'd do.

Man. Nay, if thou art a *Plain-Dealer* too, give me thy hand; for now I'll say, I am thy friend indeed: and for your two sakes, tho' I have been so lately deceiv'd in friends of both sexes;

*I will believe there are now in the world
Good-natur'd friends, who are not prostitutes,
And handsome women worthy to be friends:
Yet, for my sake, let no one e'er confide
In tears, or oaths, in love, or friend untry'd.*

(*Exeunt omnes.*)

F I N I S.



